

BT 96 .M36 1871

Manning, Henry Edward, 1808-
1892.

The fourfold sovereignty of
God

Henry Edward Manning, cardinal

THE

FOURFOLD SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD.

BY

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LONDON:

BURNS, OATES, AND COMPANY,

17, 18 Portman Street and 63 Paternoster Row.

1871.

THESE pages are intended to complete, in outline, the subject of the Lectures on the Four Great Evils of the Day. In speaking of those evils, I was often aware that the positive truths ought to have been stated first, and that the Sovereignty of God must be understood before the Revolt of Man can be measured. These Lectures, like the last, are printed as they were taken down at the time. Believing the truths and principles contained in them to be of vital moment always, and more than ever in these days, I let them go with all their faults, in the hope that some one with more ability and greater leisure will fill up the outline I have tried to draw.



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LECTURE I.

THE SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD OVER THE INTELLECT OF MAN.

✓ *‘And God indeed, having winked at the times of this ignorance, now declareth unto men, that all should everywhere do penance. Because He hath appointed a day wherein He will judge the world in equity, by the Man whom He hath appointed, giving faith to all, by raising Him from the dead.’ Acts xvii. 30, 31.*

THESE were the words of St. Paul to the Athenians, when their philosophers called him a ‘word-sower’ and a ‘publisher of new gods,’ because he preached to them Jesus and the resurrection from the dead. This was his meaning: God, in times past, shut His eyes to the idolatries and polytheism of men. Those times are past now, for God has manifested Himself to the world. He has made

Himself known, and has therefore commanded all men everywhere to do penance—that is, to believe in Him, and to repent of their sins—under pain of eternal judgment; for He has appointed a day in which He will judge the world by that Man, whom He hath appointed to be the Judge of the living and the dead; and for this end He has given faith—that is, a witness and an illumination to believe His word by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. In this declaration, the Apostle distinctly asserts the sovereignty of God as the Creator, and as the Judge of all mankind; His sovereignty over man both in body and soul, over the intellect in all its faculties, over the will in all its powers. As Maker and Lord, God has dominion and sovereignty over man, whom He made to His own image and likeness; and man being of a rational, a moral nature, is therefore a responsible being.

Last year, the Council of the Vatican made a decree in these words: ‘Forasmuch as God is the Creator, and the Lord of all things, therefore man altogether depends upon Him; and every created intellect is subject to the Uncreated Truth, and owes to it a perfect obedience both of reason and

of will.”¹ Attached to that Decree are these two canons: ‘If any man shall say, that the reason of man is so independent of God that God cannot command faith, let him be anathema.’ And again: ‘If any man shall say, that the act of faith in man is not free, let him be anathema;’ and this enunciates the subject of which I purpose to speak: The sovereignty of God over the intellect, that is, the rights of God over the rational creatures He has made. He requires of them a perfect obedience of their rational and moral nature; and holds them responsible to render that obedience. The way in which God requires the obedience of the rational nature of man is by faith.

Faith is belief in truth: but not of all truth, for of truth there are two distinct kinds. There is one kind which is necessary, and therefore compels the assent of the intellect. For instance, that things which are equal to the same, are equal to one another; that two parallel lines can never intersect; that the whole is greater than the part; that the three angles of a triangle are equal to two right-angles, and the like:—these are necessary truths, which the intellect of man is constrained by

¹ First Constitution on Catholic Faith, chap. iii.

an intrinsic law of its nature to assent to. In these truths, therefore, there is knowledge, but not faith. There is about them no obscurity, and no intervention of the Divine authority. But all moral truths, that is, all those truths which relate to the world unseen, to the nature of God, to the moral duty of man, to his future destiny—all these are truths which are not intrinsically necessary. They depend upon the will of God, and upon the constitution and order of His revelation. They are therefore believed upon the authority of God, who has revealed them. The authority of God intervenes to require of us the submission of our intellect and of our will to the revelation He has made.

It is thus, then, that God exercises His sovereignty in requiring faith. He commands faith under the penalty of eternal death. The words of our Divine Lord expressly declare this law: ‘He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved: but he that believeth not, shall be condemned.’² That is, the voluntary act of faith is taken as the test of obedience; and according to the obedience or disobedience of the rational nature will the judgment be hereafter.

² St. Mark xvi. 16.

We are confidently told in these days that faith is a weakness and a blindness; that it is unworthy of man; that it is servility and degradation, and I know not what besides. I will affirm, then, that faith is the most perfect act of the human reason; that the most reasonable act of man is to believe in the Uncreated Reason of God; that the highest act of an intellectual nature, next only to the eternal contemplation of the Uncreated Truth hereafter, is to believe that Uncreated Truth now; and this is what I shall endeavour to draw out.

1. First, God exercises His sovereignty over the human intellect, even by the lights of nature. There is in the natural world a manifestation of God which lays all men under the obligation of knowing Him. They who, with the lights of nature before them, remain in ignorance of God, are not only intellectually in error, they are also morally in error, and they are responsible for that moral error. Not to know God is sin. The Apostle says to the Romans, ‘The invisible things of Him’—that is, of God—‘from the creation of the world, are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, His eternal power also and divinity;

so that they are inexcusable. Because that, when they had known God, they have not glorified Him as God, nor gave thanks; but became vain in their thoughts, and their foolish heart was darkened. For, professing themselves to be wise, they became fools. And they changed the glory of the incorruptible God into the likeness of the image of a corruptible man.³ Here, then, is an express declaration, that the lights of nature are sufficient to prove to us the existence of God, His power, His Divinity, and, therefore, His perfections; so that they are inexcusable who do not know God, and, therefore, do not believe and make an act of faith in Him, and of submission to His sovereignty, as their Maker and Lord.

Again, the Apostle says: ‘When the Gentiles, who have not the law, do by nature those things that are of the law, these, having not the law, are a law to themselves: who show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience bearing witness to them, and their thoughts within themselves accusing them, or else defending them.’⁴ That is, there is in every man a moral sense, or instinct, or judgment, or testimony to

³ Rom. i. 20-23.

⁴ Ibid. ii. 14, 15.

right and wrong, which rebukes him when he does wrong, which sustains him when he does right. There is therefore an inward light, whereby the human reason may perceive the moral law of God; and if so, then every man has within him a testimony to know that he has an intellectual and moral nature; and if he has an intellectual and moral nature, he has a soul—that is, the image of God—within him, and that image has an immortality. They, then, who, amidst the lights of nature, do not know God, or the distinctions of right and wrong, or that they have a soul which is immortal and responsible, are guilty for that ignorance. To be ignorant of these things is sin, because such ignorance is vincible. The lights of nature are sufficient to prove these things, and they who are ignorant of them are willingly ignorant of them; that is, ignorant through their own will, and therefore culpable before God; and for that culpable ignorance will have to give account at the last day.

2. But, secondly, there is another world by which God has revealed Himself. The lights of the natural creation on all sides testify to the truths of which I have already spoken; but there is a supernatural world at this moment round about us, against

which the disputers of this world rail, as the philosophers at Athens. They who preach of this supernatural world are 'word-sowers,' babblers, 'publishers of new gods.' Nevertheless, there exists in the midst of mankind a kingdom, present, visible, and audible, manifesting itself with sufficient evidence, through which God demands the submission of faith, through which He manifests His sovereignty over the intellect of man. That kingdom has about it certain marks, properties, and prerogatives, which no human institution, kingdom, or empire ever possessed.

For instance, its indefectible existence. The history of mankind is the history of successive dynasties. Like shadows they have come and passed away; they have each one contained the principle of its own dissolution. Not one of them was intrinsically changeless and incorruptible. The Church of Jesus Christ, from its foundation to this hour, continues incorruptible in itself. The worldly accidents around it are human, and cleave to it like the dust to our feet. As the light of heaven is changeless, incorruptible, unsoiled in its purity, though it looks upon all the corruptions of the earth, so is the Church of God in the world;

and as the Presence of our Divine Lord in the Blessed Sacrament abides in its immutable sanctity in the midst of the sins of men, so the Church of Jesus Christ abides incorruptibly the same, the sins and corruptions of those who visibly belong to it notwithstanding. It also has an indissoluble unity, and an immutability in the law of morals and in the doctrines of the faith, which it has taught from the beginning, and now at this time teaches in every place.

If I affirm that the faith has never changed, men may say: 'If you speak of past time, how can you prove it?' I affirm therefore that the faith is the same now in all the world. This is a fact of the present, and may be easily tested. Now this changeless identity of one truth in all places at this time is the countersign of the immutable perpetuity of the same truth in all times. Things which spring from one law have one type. Corruption is change, and breeds diversity. Identity points to a changeless principle which is above the order of nature.

Now these are phenomena manifesting a supernatural kingdom in this natural world. The reason of man, if it be consistent, can ascribe the

existence of that fact to none but the Divine Creator. If man had made it, man might rid himself of it. If man had founded it, he might destroy it. If man had set it up, he might sweep it off the face of the earth; but man has striven to sweep it away, and cannot, any more than he can sweep away the mountains which God has rooted in the earth. God perpetually defies man by the existence of His Church. He manifests His sovereignty over the reason of man by this witness, which man can neither deny nor explain away. He can in no way account for its existence and changeless identity: if he will not account for it by the only solution which is true. God shows His sovereignty by baffling the reason and will of men, which cannot rid the world of the presence of God, manifested in the supernatural order of His power.

The mere lights of nature, then—for I am thus far treating the question as a matter of human reason, of human history—these testify, both in the natural and in what I will call the Christian world, to the existence of God's sovereignty. But this is not all. The Christian world which testifies to the sovereignty of God, testifies to the coming of the Son of God in the flesh—that is, to the In-

arnation. It testifies to the perpetual presence of God the Holy Ghost. As a fact of history, it is certain that it has spoken and still speaks to mankind with a voice which never ceases, and the world tells us that its pretensions never change; that is to say, it teaches always the same things, and claims for that which it teaches a Divine authority. It calls on men to submit their intellect to its Divine voice. It claims, in virtue of God's authority over His creatures, that we should render to Him that worship of the reason, that 'reasonable service,' which the Apostle declares to be the true sacrifice of man to God.⁵ When St. Paul preached to the Athenians, so long as they believed him only to be a disputer like themselves, and that his teaching was based only on human philosophy, they called him a 'word-sower;' but in the day when they knew that he was a teacher sent from God, that he had Divine assistance in what he taught, that the message he uttered was a Divine message, that the authority by which he spoke was the authority of God, from that moment they received all he said as coming from a fountain of Divine certainty. They believed; that is,

⁵ Rom xii. 1.

they offered the obedience of faith to what he said. They knew that, in hearing him, they heard the word of God ; that what he delivered, he delivered not from himself, but from the Master that sent him.

So is it now with the Church in the world. The sovereignty which God claims over our intellect is the obedience of faith rendered to the Divine voice of His Church.

We can stand in relation to God and His truth only in one of two ways. We are either the critics who examine, test, and choose, who accept or reject for ourselves by our own lights and our own judgment ; or we are the disciples who sit at the feet of a Divine teacher, receiving by faith, with the simple adhesion of our whole nature, intellectual and moral, that which He teaches. We owe Him the submission of our intellect, because we know that all revealed truth comes from the uncreated intelligence of God. The highest act of the reason of man is to submit itself and to be conformed to the intelligence of God. We owe to Him the submission of our reason, because the Uncreated Truth is the original of our intelligence, and will be the law of our judgment hereafter.

We owe Him also the love of our hearts, because that manifestation of the truth of God is the manifestation also of His grace and His love.

What has been said may, I think, suffice to show that the obedience of faith is not servile, nor degrading, nor irrational, nor unworthy of an intellectual being. Nay, I shall show hereafter that the argument turns the other way; as may readily be seen by a moment's consideration of the effects of this submission of faith to a Divine teacher.

3. The first and immediate effect is the illumination of the reason. The reason is pervaded by a light which, without faith, it could not possess. And the intellect is dignified by that illumination. How, then, can it be degraded? What is the illumination which we receive by faith? The Apostle says: 'Every best gift, and every perfect gift, is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no change, nor shadow of vicissitude,'⁶ forasmuch as He is the immutable truth. It is, therefore, a participation of the light of God. Again: 'That was the true Light, which enlighteneth every man that cometh into the

⁶ St. James i. 17.

world.⁷ The light of God is the dignity of the intellect of man. In what, then, does it consist? It may be said to consist in three things:

First, in the most pure and perfect knowledge mankind has ever had of God: of His nature, personality, and perfections; of His wisdom, sanctity, purity, love, mercy, power; and also of His relations to us, as our Father, our Redeemer, our Sanctifier: Secondly, in the most perfect knowledge of the nature of man; because God was manifested in our manhood. The original and the image were united in One Person; and in the Person of Jesus Christ the most perfect manifestation of the image of God in our manhood, glorified by the incarnation of the Divine Original, and enveloped in the splendour of the Eternal Son of God, was revealed to the world. In the vision of the Word made flesh, we see not only the humanity of the first Adam, but the elevation, perfection, and glory of our manhood in the second Adam, from whom we derive life and immortality: Thirdly, in the most perfect morality, the most pure and most elevated; as, for example, the Sermon on the Mount. Does there exist in the whole history of mankind, in

⁷ St. John i. 9.

all the philosophies of man, anything to compare for moral perfection with the eight Beatitudes? Where will you find in all the teaching of man this one simple precept: 'All things, whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do you also to them'?⁸ Where did you ever find the precept: 'Love your enemies: bless them that curse you,'—where, except only in the mouth of Jesus Christ? Was it ever heard: 'Be ye therefore perfect, as also your Father, which is in heaven, is perfect,' 'who maketh His sun to rise upon the good and bad, and raineth upon the just and the unjust'?⁹ Here is a perfect morality, to which nothing that ever came from the unaided intellect or will of man bears any comparison. Where in the morals of mankind can be found anything to compare with the two precepts of loving God with all our heart and our neighbour as ourselves? Where can be found anything to compare in generosity, in tenderness of love, in sacrifice of self, with the Oblation of our Lord upon the Cross? There is, then, an illumination given to us by the light of faith, which no created intellect can possess from any other source. But once more:

⁸ St. Matt. vii. 12.

⁹ Ibid. v. 48, 45.

4. This illumination elevates the reason of man. It raises it to a state and order of dignity otherwise unattainable; and in so doing, it confirms even its natural perfection.

First, The truths of the natural order are confirmed and made clear, and a Divine certainty is added to them by the light of revelation. The existence of God, the law of right and wrong, the soul and its immortality—these truths of the natural order are confirmed both in clearness and certainty by the light of faith.

Secondly, there are superadded to the truths of the natural order the truths of the supernatural order: for instance, the knowledge of God through the Incarnation; the knowledge of our relations to Him through the adoption of grace; of our brotherhood and consanguinity with Jesus Christ, the Incarnate Son of God; of the indwelling of God the Holy Ghost in the intellect and will of man, making man His temple; besides this, the presence of God, not only in nature, but in grace, and that pervading the whole world and present in ourselves. St. Augustine, describing his condition before he believed, said, ‘I sought Thee everywhere and found Thee not; for Thou wast within

me, and I was out of myself. I sought Thee everywhere but in that place where Thou wast to be found—in my own soul.' We know by faith that the presence of God inhabits each one of us; that we are united to the unseen world and to the communion of the spirits of just men made perfect; and that the vision of God hereafter is our inheritance.

These are supernatural truths added to the lights of the natural order. Surely the reason possessing them is elevated above both nature and itself. St. John says, 'Behold what manner of charity the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be named, and should be the sons of God. Therefore, the world hath not known us, because it hath not known Him. We are now the sons of God: and it hath not yet appeared what we shall be. We know, that when He shall appear, we shall be like to Him: because we shall see Him as He is.'¹⁰ Is it possible to conceive of any elevation greater than the consciousness that we are sons of God? But it is this that faith gives to the reason of man.

5. Lastly, faith makes the reason perfect. The

¹⁰ 1 St. John iii. 1, 2.

reason itself, as a faculty or an intellectual power, is perfected by the action of faith upon it. Just as the hand by experience is strengthened and acquires skill, and is able to execute the most powerful or the finest operations; and as the ear may be attuned and cultivated to harmony, and the eye to an exquisite perfection of sight; so is it with the action of faith upon the intellectual faculties of the soul. Take, for example, the whole history of the Old Testament, and compare the intellectual condition of Israel with the intellectual condition of the Gentile world. No man has ever yet ventured to say that, as compared with the intellectual state of the chief philosophers of the Gentile world, the Hebrew patriarchs, prophets, and saints were not, in intellectual stature, a head and shoulders above them. No man can fail to see that the very intellect of the Jewish race was elevated by the illumination of faith, and that personal character, domestic life, and the public commonwealth of Israel, all bore the marks of an elevation derived from faith. Submission to the sovereignty of God was the cause of this elevation, and therefore of the dignity of Israel.

Among the Gentile world, it is true that in-

telleets such as those of Plato and Aristotle, to mention no others—the one the great example of natural theology or knowledge of divine things, the other the most perfect example of ethical or moral philosophy—exhibit a logical cultivation not to be found in the splendour and dignity of Isaias or Ezechiel; but if we compare with them the majesty and sublimity of the Prophets, who will hesitate in saying that the moral dignity and grandeur of Isaias and Ezechiel far transcend them in moral elevation? But this I will further affirm, that wheresoever the belief in God was low, intellect was low; and that just in proportion as elevation and cultivation of intellect was attained by mankind, in that proportion they approached a purer knowledge of God and of morals. Plato stands at the head of all the intellects of the ancient world for culture and lofty speculation. In him, I may say, the speculative intellect of the order of nature culminated; and in him, above all, we see a Theism which for purity and truth approaches nearest to the theology of Israel. In like manner Aristotle, for subtlety and dialectical precision, stands alone among the intellects of antiquity; and in him we find the purest and

truest morality the world without revelation has ever known. The ethics of Aristotle remain to this day as the basis on which the moral theology of Christendom reposes. It is a pure and accurate delineation of the morals of mankind known by the light of nature; and St. Thomas builds upon it as a sure foundation. The world therefore bears testimony to this, that in proportion as the intellect of man approaches the knowledge of God and of self, it is dignified, and its mental and moral faculties are strengthened and expanded towards their perfection.

The same truth is still more manifest in the Christian world. The intellectual history of the modern world is to be found written in the history of Christianity. The intellectual powers of mankind are to be found in their highest perfection in Christendom. It is no objection whatsoever for men of the present day, who believe nothing and who profess to have rejected even the existence of God, to say, 'Look at our men of science—are they in intellectual dignity or power inferior to those whom you call your doctors?' The answer is this: Their intellectual dignity is derived from the culture of the Christian world. They would never

be what they are, if they had not been nurtured and ripened upon that same mystical vine from which they have fallen. They retain after their fall the savour and the quality of the tree from which they fell. But can they reproduce it? let them try: and how long will they transmit it? Those who have fallen from the knowledge of God and of His revelation have fallen from the tradition of intellectual culture. 'If any one abide not in Me, he shall be cast forth as a branch, and shall wither.'¹¹ This is true, both spiritually and intellectually. The intellectual standard of sceptics and infidels has no perpetuity. They die out as individuals, and their few disciples are scattered.

On the other hand, I would ask, is there in the history of mankind anything, for intellectual power, precision, amplitude, fertility, to be compared with Saint Thomas Aquinas or Suarez, to mention two only out of a multitude? The profound and pretentious ignorance of this day will no doubt think that these two examples belong to the middle ages, or that the latter was only emerging from those times of obscurity; but the man who so speaks cannot know the books on

¹¹ St. John xv. 6.

which he passes judgment. The intellectual system of the world, in its refinement and culture, will be found passing through the unbroken tradition of such minds; and the philosophers and men of science of this day, who tell us that we can know nothing with certainty but that which is within the reach of sense, have not dignified the human intellect, but have degraded it. They reject the intellectual system of the whole world, and the highest truths which it proclaims.

The obedience of faith, therefore, which is due to the sovereignty of God, is the most reasonable act of an intellectual being, the most perfect act of which the human intellect in this state of mortality is capable. There remains after it nothing but the vision of the Uncreated Truth without a veil. 'After the *Summa* of St. Thomas there remains nothing but the light of glory,' is not an academical exaggeration, but a very truth.

Faith, then, is the illumination, the elevation, and the perfection even, of the faculty of reason itself. Faith gives power to the human reason, by giving to it principles of certainty from which to start. As in the pure sciences the axioms and demonstrations give firmness, strength, solidity, and on-

ward progress to the scientific intellect, so in the knowledge of God, and of man, and of morals, the revelation of God gives the first axioms and primary principles of Divine certainty, which unfold, elevate, and strengthen even the reason itself.

I said before that this argument turns the other way. If faith be the elevation, unbelief is the degradation of the human intellect: and that for two reasons. First, because it deprives it of the illumination of truth; and, secondly, because it paralyses the intellectual faculties.

It deprives it of the illumination of truth; it robs it at once of all the truths of revelation. All the lights of the supernatural order are alike extinguished: God and His kingdom, the communion of saints, and our relations to it; faith, hope, and charity; the Church of God in the world; the mysteries of grace,—everything resting on the supernatural order is darkened. Just as, if light were withdrawn from the world, sight would cease to be, for the eye in midnight can see nothing; so the deprivation of the human reason by unbelief leaves it in midnight. But it is not only the lights of the supernatural order that at once

are clouded—the lights even of the natural order become dim. The intellect loses certainty and firmness of belief, even in those principles of the natural order to which the lights of nature testify. It is certain that Deists lose much of the light of the knowledge of God when they reject revelation, because even nature ceases to testify as luminously, and to speak as articulately, of the existence of God, His eternal power and Divinity, to those in whom the sceptical spirit is at work. Again, if they do not lose the knowledge of their own soul, and of its immortality, they begin to doubt about it.

Day after day, we hear the confident talk of men who tell us that we have no evidence to believe in anything but the material mechanism, which we can trace by physiology, chemistry, or comparative anatomy; that beyond this we have no power to ascertain anything about the existence of the soul, or will, or life. There are men at this day, who consider themselves intellectual, openly denying the existence of the soul; and who, having denied the existence of the soul, deny the existence of right and wrong. They tell us that right and wrong, and the instincts, dictates, and re-

bukes of our conscience, are arbitrary associations of pleasure and pain connected with certain actions, by the conventional traditions in which we are brought up. If so, then there is no such thing as law, either human or Divine: and if no such thing as law, then no such thing as sin or crime, and therefore no such thing as justice; and if there be no such thing as justice, there is no such thing as injustice; and if there be no such thing as intrinsic right, there is no such thing as intrinsic wrong; and if not, then we are in a world which has no more right, order, sweetness, or beauty, but we are turned back again into the inorganic state of creation, 'void and empty,' and darkness rests upon the face of the deep.

But there is something more degrading than this. If I have not a soul, then am I like the cattle. Nay, more; if I have not a soul, I have no immortality: then, so far, I am as the beasts that perish.

This gospel is preached to us by way of manifesting the dignity of the human reason. Choose for yourselves, whether this be dignity or debasement.

But unbelief is not only a privation of the

lights of truth, it is a paralysis of the reason itself.

For I would ask: What is scepticism or doubt? It is a partial denial of the truth or existence of things. A denial is a bold assertion that the thing is not true, or does not exist. A doubt is half way to a denial. And on what is it founded? It is founded on the supposed uncertainty of evidence; but this again is founded on the assertion that the senses are fallible, so that we cannot depend on them; and that the faculties of the reason may also go astray, and that their interpretation of the senses cannot be trusted. And this philosophy is preached to us as the dignity of the human reason. To me it appears to be intellectual paralysis, tending to intellectual idiocy. To tell me my senses do not report to me truly the existence and facts of the external world in a way that I can depend on, and to tell me that my reason cannot interpret them; and that I cannot know with a perfect certainty the internal facts of my own consciousness, is to shake my whole being, and to reduce me first to a state of paralysis, and afterwards to a state of idiocy. And yet this is the result of sceptical unbelief. In the face of this we

are told that faith is degradation to the human intellect, and that unbelief is its dignity.

I must now go no farther; and will add but one only word more.

Last year, the Council of the Vatican made the Decree which I have already recited. The Council of the Vatican has been a sign, against which the contradiction of the whole world has been directed. The reason is evident. In past times, every Council of the Church had to deal with some one particular heresy, by which some one specific doctrine of the faith had been denied. The Council of the Vatican has had to deal with the whole principle of unbelief. It is not one doctrine only of Christianity that is at stake now, but the whole of Christianity—the whole revelation of God, the whole principle of faith. The axe is laid to the root of the tree. The Council of the Vatican, knowing this full well, made and promulgated, before the tumults of the world rendered necessary the suspension of its labours, two Constitutions, which, if it never add another word, will be inscribed in the history of the Church—ay, and upon the intellect of the world too—as a luminous record of Divine truth that can never be effaced.

The First Constitution of Catholic faith may be called the philosophy of faith in the lights of nature and the order of nature, in the grounds and the preambles upon which Divine faith rests, as the most perfect and most reasonable act of man.

The Second Constitution is the declaration of the Rule of faith, or the Authority upon which faith reposes. This doctrinal authority was defined to be the infallibility of the Roman Pontiff. The infallibility of the Church has been at all times, and by all Catholics, believed as a doctrine of Divine revelation. Till controversy had clouded truth, no one doubted that the infallibility of the Church contains also the infallibility of the Head, as the reasonableness of man resides eminently in the head which governs the body. It had become evident, that they who attempted to deny the infallibility of the Head of the Church were covertly—and I believe many unconsciously—denying the Divine guidance of the whole Church. The Council of the Vatican, then, with the fearless liberty of truth which belongs to the kingdom of God, and comes from God alone, promulgated these most opportune and necessary Constitutions of Faith. It has declared, in the midst of an unbelieving age, that

faith is due to God, because He is Sovereign, and because as Sovereign He commands it; and that to know what we are to believe, He has instituted upon earth a witness, which is itself a sufficient evidence of its own Divine commission, that is, His visible Church; a witness that may be seen as the representative of His Incarnation; a witness that may be heard, because the voice of that Church speaks to the world, and is His voice. The Council of the Vatican, therefore, calls to us all, as St. Paul called to the Corinthians: ‘And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not in loftiness of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of Jesus Christ. For I judged not myself to know anything among you, but Jesus Christ, and Him crucified. And my teaching was not in the persuasive words of man’s wisdom, but in demonstration of the spirit and of the power of God. That your faith might not stand on the wisdom of man, but on the power of God.’¹² And to obtain that Divine certainty, there is one simple condition: to believe in the Divine Teacher whom He has sent.

¹² 1 Cor. ii. 1-5.

LECTURE II.

THE SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD OVER THE WILL OF MAN.

‘Behold, I come : in the head of the book it is written of Me, that I should do Thy will, O God.’ Hebrews x. 7.

THESE words, taken by the Apostle from the Book of Psalms, are the words of the Son of God, speaking in prophecy, of His advent and His mission in the world : ‘Behold, I come : in the head of the book’—that is, in the outset of prophecy—‘it is written of Me.’ It was of this that God spoke in the beginning, when He foretold that the seed of the woman should crush the serpent’s head. The coming of Jesus Christ into the world was for the fulfilment of the will of God. Throughout the Gospels we read from His own lips that His work on earth was to do His Father’s will. ‘I came down from heaven not to do My own will, but the will of Him that sent Me.’¹ ‘My food is to do the

¹ St. John vi. 38.

will of Him that sent Me.² The obedience of Jesus Christ to the will of God was the recognition of the sovereignty of God over the will of man. Obedience to the Divine will is the first law of the soul of man, and in this is his perfection; which is our next subject.

Our last subject was the sovereignty of God over the intellect; and the sovereignty of God over the intellect is the means and condition to the sovereignty of God over the will; for God, being Perfect Intelligence, requires of no man an irrational obedience. He requires of all men an obedience according to the laws and perfections of the human reason, and to the laws and perfections of truth. It is a law of our nature, that we can will nothing that we have not first known. Our intellect must first know the object upon which we would set our will, or the will can make no act either of desire or aversion. The intellect, therefore, is the channel through which the sovereignty of God reaches the will of man. In proportion as we know God more perfectly, our will ought to be more perfectly conformed to the will of God. The will in man is defined

² St. John iv. 34.

to be a rational desire, and it is made up of two things. There is in it the desire after good, and there is the reason guiding that desire: so that the will is, as philosophers call it, a rational appetite; but with this peculiar office and power—it can control the appetite; it has the power of originating our actions, and of controlling itself. Now the intellect of man has analogy to the eye. The eye, which is the organ of sight, is under the control of the will. We may fix the eye on any given object, or we may turn the eye away from it, or we may either look intently or languidly at it. All the day long we see a multitude of things without looking at them. The eye is filled with the light of day, and with the objects round about it; but the eye can be fixed for the time only upon one, and that one is the only object upon which we can be said to look. We see a multitude of objects, which perhaps we do not recognise at the time, nor remember a moment after. So it is with the intellect. It is controlled by the will, which can determine on what object it shall be fixed; and whether it shall look fixedly and steadfastly at truth, or whether it shall turn the intellect away from truth, or make it look

at truth so cursorily and languidly as not to recognise it. Now this constitutes our personal responsibility in regard to truth. As I have said before, the words of our Divine Lord, 'He that believeth and is baptised shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be condemned,' express the voluntariness of the act of faith. Faith is a virtue and a grace of the Holy Spirit; but it is also an act of obedience on the part of man: and we are responsible for our unbelief, and shall be judged for it, because God has given a sufficient light and evidence, both for the truths of the natural and supernatural order. He will not require of any man to know any truth which is physically beyond his power to know; He will only require of man to answer for the truth which he knew, and that which he might have known. He will not require that which is impossible; for God never commands impossible things. He is a God of justice, and His justice is perfect equity. 'He weigheth the spirits,' and He knows with Divine precision what is possible and what is not possible to each one of us. He may require, indeed, that which is morally difficult, because that which is only difficult is not

impossible. We are responsible to know all truth which is sufficiently proposed to us, and all that by diligent search we may find; and therefore we shall be inexcusable at the last day if we do not see the lights of nature, which are so abundant, inundating the world, and if we have not known the truths to which they testify—that is to say, the existence of God, His eternal power and Divinity, His perfections, the distinction of right and wrong, the law of conscience, our own free will, the soul and its immortality—and therefore our responsibility to our Creator. These are truths of the natural order, apart from and anterior to revelation. They are within our reach to know. All men, even those who are not only out of the Catholic Church, but most remote from it, are bound to know these truths. To those who are within the unity of the Catholic Church, there is not a doctrine of revelation which is not within their reach. God has given sufficient light and evidence for all who are within the unity of the Catholic Church to know all the truths of revelation. To those who are out of the unity of the Church, their probation depends on this—whether their separation from that unity and the

light contained therein be a conscious and voluntary act of their own. If so, then they are responsible. But if it be an inherited state of privation, as I have said before, like the condition of people robbed, by the sin of forefathers, of their inheritance of perfect light, such as our own country, then many are not responsible. They will not be called to answer for light they have never known, and never could have known. By them the visible Church has never been seen, the voice of the Church has never been heard: and things that do not appear are as things that do not exist. They have never stood face to face with it as we do; the light of Catholic faith has never fallen upon them. They have been brought up repeating the baptismal creed, 'I believe in the Holy Ghost, the holy Catholic Church;' but between that article of creed and their conscience has intervened a coloured medium, and a false object. They have believed themselves to be in the Catholic Church, because they have mistaken a system of human creation for the Church of Jesus Christ.

The law of God, then, is this; that in proportion as we possess sufficient evidence to know

the truth, He will require of us to give an account of that truth at the last day. We must give an account of what we have known, and what we have not known, and the reasons why we have not known that which we might have known. In this, therefore, consists the sovereignty of God over the will; and I wish you to bear in mind, that when I speak of faith as of the highest act of the human reason, and the most rational exercise of the human intellect, such faith is not a blind and obscure act of the superstitious and the credulous, who hide their heads in twilight. Faith is an act of the human reason, expanding itself towards God its Maker, and receiving the noontide light of revelation with the fullest development of its intellectual powers. And in proportion as it receives the truth, and submits its created intelligence to the uncreated wisdom of God, it is elevated and made perfect.

We will now go on to our next subject, namely, the sovereignty of God over the will. To make it as clear as I can, let us consider the relations in which the human will has hitherto stood, and will stand, to the sovereignty of God.

1. The first relation was when God made man

‘to His own image and likeness;’ that is, He imparted to him a spiritual nature. He gave him an intelligence and a will like His own. Man was the image or reflection of his Maker. The will, as I have said, consists in this: it has the power of originating our own actions. The lower animals have a power of spontaneity in following their natural desires, such as for food and rest; but they have no will. Everything voluntary is spontaneous, but not everything which is spontaneous is voluntary. The lower animals, though they have this spontaneous power, have no will, because the will, as I said in the beginning, is a rational desire or appetite guided and elevated by the reason; and as the lower animals, though they have instincts, are irrational—that is, have no reason—they have no will. The will, then, is the power of originating rational actions, and those rational actions are the actions of a will in conformity with the reason, and of the reason in conformity with the intelligence of God. But we are wont also to speak of the freedom of the will. Now, everything that is free is voluntary, but not everything which is voluntary is free, because the blessed in heaven voluntarily love God and voluntarily wor-

ship Him; but they are not free not to love Him or not to worship Him. The very perfection of their nature necessitates their love and worship; and yet the will in its voluntary action is perfect. It is the most perfect and entire spontaneousness, elevated and guided by reason, and by the illumination of the whole soul of the blessed. There is therefore a kind of freedom or liberty which does not belong to the perfection of the will.

When God made man in the beginning, He gave him a perfect liberty. He was not constrained by any external authority which deprived him of his freedom; he was not necessitated, as the blessed are, by a final perfection. He had therefore these three kinds of liberty: first, he had the power either to do or not to do, to act or to refrain from acting; secondly, he had a power, within the limits of good and justice, to do this or that act—he was not compelled to any specific acts of goodness or of justice; lastly, he had a power which the blessed in heaven have not—of doing good and evil. But this power of doing good and evil is indeed a part of our liberty in our present state of probation and of imperfection; but it is not a part of the

perfect liberty of the will. The use of the will is to do good; but the abuse of the will is to do evil. It is an abuse of the power of originating our actions if we act contrary to reason, contrary to justice, contrary to the will of God. In the beginning, God created man with this threefold liberty, to put him upon trial or probation; and yet there was no cause or need or excuse why he should offend and fall, for God constituted him in original justice. There never was a moment when the created will of the first man was not sanctified and sustained by the Holy Ghost, when he had not the presence of abundant grace within him to sustain him in the full equilibrium of his liberty. There was, then, no necessity—nay, no reason whatsoever except the abuse of his freedom—why he should do evil. His whole soul was under the dominion of the Divine knowledge and love, and his heart was the throne of God reigning supreme within it. This, then, was the first relation of the will to the sovereignty of God.

2. The second relation was introduced by the Fall of man; and see how it came about. The entrance of sin into the world was by the abuse of the will. Sin came through the intellect. The

temptation was addressed to the reason, which, being perverted, perverted the will; but the will was free to listen or not. The temptation was addressed with an exquisite subtlety of malice. It began by a question, and that question began by the word 'Why,' which was then spoken for the first time. The tempter came and said, 'Why hath God commanded?' This was a temptation to criticise the ways and to question the justice of God. 'Why hath God commanded you, that you shall not eat of every tree of Paradise?' This awakened a questioning, perhaps a murmuring, spirit. The next step of the temptation was a contradiction. 'Ye shall not die the death.' In this was insinuated a contradiction of the known truth. Thirdly, there was an insinuation of injustice against God. 'For God doth know that in what day soever you shall eat thereof, your eyes shall be opened, and you shall be as gods;' as if to say, God is jealous lest a creature of His hands should be equal to Himself. Now, the first temptation came through the intellect, and as it passed through the thoughts it wrought upon the soul, it undermined the steadfastness of the will, it inflamed the passions, it made them impatient of restraint, and thereby it

inclined the will to abuse its liberty and power. The abuse of its liberty and power was this: to do evil, to break the known law, to violate the commandment of God. In doing so, it acted irrationally; the will, in doing evil, then lost its rational character. It was an abuse and debasement of its nature; and the will being debased by this irrational action, deprived of its supernatural perfection, forfeited the grace of the Spirit of God. It biassed its own working, it warped its own nature. As a perfect machine, if it be rudely jarred, loses its perfect action, and all its operations are thrown out of gear, so with the soul of man, when by a wilful abuse of his rational power he acted irrationally. In the moment when he rebelled against the sovereign will of God, his passions and affections—which before were in subjection, and in perfect harmony and conformity to his will, obeying its dominion and government—rose up and rebelled against him. The passions were both disordered and inflamed; they were no longer within the range and control of reason. The affections, losing their reasonable character, became internal temptations, so that the words of the prophet were verified in the first man: ‘The

wicked are like the raging sea, which cannot rest, and the waves thereof cast up dirt and mire.”³ The tumultuous passions and affections of the heart cast up desires and cravings which are irrational, and destructive of the soul of man. Just as one poisonous root will propagate and spread over a fertile garden, and one spark of fire will kindle a boundless conflagration, so one perverse will, beginning in irrational disobedience, has multiplied itself throughout mankind, and the whole world is set on fire by its perversity. The human will, becoming carnal and irrational in the Fall of our first parents, has been reproduced in all their children. ‘That which is born of the flesh is flesh.’⁴ We inherit that nature as children of wrath. This, then, is the second relation of the will to the sovereignty of God, by the irrational abuse of its own freedom.

3. Then, thirdly, as man fell by irrational disobedience, he is redeemed by an obedience which is in perfect conformity to the intelligence and will of God. St. Irenæus says: ‘The obedience of Mary broke the chains forged by the disobedience of Eve. What Eve had bound by unbelief,

³ Isaias lvii. 20.

⁴ St. John iii. 6.

Mary has unbound by faith.⁵ That is to say: the will fell by the unbelief of Eve, the first virgin, and was restored through the faith of Mary, the second virgin. The first Eve listened to the tempter, and fell; the second Eve listened to the angel, and believed. When the angel saluted her with, 'Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with thee!' and revealed to her the mystery of the Incarnation, her intelligence, overcome for a moment by the splendour of supernatural light, asked, 'How shall this be done?'⁶ But at once she made an act of perfect submission and of perfect faith: 'Behold the handmaid of the Lord, be it done to me according to thy word.' Here was a perfectly obedient will restored to mankind, a will reconstituted in that state of perfect submission to the sovereignty of God in which man was in the beginning. Of her was born One more perfect still, because He is the Incarnate Son of God, in Whom the words of prophecy were fulfilled: 'Behold, I come, to do Thy will, O God.'

The fulfilment of the will of God was the whole work of redemption. Obedience unto death was the restoration of mankind. When the Son of

⁵ St. Iren. Adv. Hær. iii. 34.

⁶ St. Luke i. 34.

God took our humanity, He took a human soul; and in that soul a human intelligence and a human will, in all things like our own. But between the Sacred Humanity and ours there was this difference: the human will of Jesus had in it no rebellions. It had what we distinguish as a superior and an inferior will; that is, He had a reason and conscience like our own, but both were perfect. He had also affections and infirmities, and, as the theology of the Catholic Church says, not passions—for the word by tradition has an evil meaning—but ‘pro-passions;’ that is, those affections of our humanity which are passions in us, in Him are perfections. Nevertheless, the superior and the inferior will of the Son of God in the Garden of Gethsemani were seen, not in conflict, but each exerting its proper and natural perfections. The sensitive or inferior will shrank from the vision of sin, from the foresight of the death of the world, from the anticipation of the Passion, from the agony which He then already suffered, from the Divine fore-knowledge of the anguish of that night, and of the desolation on Calvary. Human nature in Him shrank from pain and death, just as we do; but the superior will stood steadfast. Knowing that

it was for the glory of God, and the redemption of the world, that He should accept and drink the chalice of His Passion, He said : ‘ O My Father, if it is possible, let this chalice pass from Me ; nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou wilt.’⁷ There was no wavering of imperfection in that agony of our Divine Lord. He being God, the will that was in Him was deified. It was united to the perfections of the Son of God ; it was sanctified by the presence of the Holy Ghost ; it was constituted in the Divine perfections of freedom and obedience ; it could be used with the utmost liberty of human freedom ; it could never be abused, because of His perfection both as God and as man. That which constituted the merit of our Lord’s Passion was this : though it was necessary, from His twofold perfection, human and Divine, that He should love God, and obey Him, and fulfil His will with perfection, it was not necessary that He should suffer the agony in the Garden, nor the Crucifixion upon Calvary. These things were freely chosen by Him, out of love to mankind. ‘ Greater love than this no man hath, that a man lay down his life for his friends.’⁸ It was an act of the love of the Son of

⁷ St. Matt. xxvi. 39.

⁸ St. John xv. 13.

God to give Himself for three-and-thirty years to mental sorrow, and to His agony on the Cross, for our redemption. He freely chose that way of redemption—the way of blood-shedding, passion, humiliation—because it was a more profuse revelation of perfect love. This way of redemption was not required by any necessity, but freely ordained in the wisdom of God.

4. Fourthly, there is still another relation of the will to the sovereignty of God, and it is that in which we all stand now to Him. We are not like the first Adam, in a state of original justice. We are not like Adam after the Fall, in a state deprived of grace. We are not like the second Adam in His Divine perfections; but we are regenerate members of the second Adam, and there is a perfection which comes by the Holy Ghost to all those who are united as members of the Body of Christ. The will of their Divine Head pervades the will of those that are born again. You, in your baptism, passed from the state of nature to the state of grace. ‘That which is born of the flesh is flesh, but that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.’⁹ You have been born of water and of the

⁹ St. John iii. 6.

Holy Ghost, and ‘Christ Jesus is in you, unless perhaps you be reprobates.’¹⁰ Your will is a regenerate will. It is the will of the Son of God. What Jesus had by nature, because He is the Son of God, consubstantial with the Father, you have by grace, because by adoption you are made the sons of God. St. John writes: ‘As many as received Him, to them He gave power to be made the sons of God.’¹¹ The power has been given to you all; not to become equal and co-eternal with the Incarnate Son of God, but to be sons of God by adoption. Again, St. Paul says: ‘You have not received the spirit of bondage again in fear; but you have received the spirit of adoption of sons, whereby we cry: Abba (Father).’ ‘For whosoever are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.’¹² And as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they have a regenerate will, elevated by faith, hope, and charity, raised by the sanctifying grace of God, to a union with God Himself. The Apostle says: ‘He who adheres to the Lord is one spirit;’¹³ and they who are united, by the Spirit of God dwelling in

¹⁰ 2 Cor. xiii. 5.¹¹ St. John i. 12.¹² Rom. viii. 15, 14.¹³ 1 Cor. vi. 17.

them, to our Divine Lord and Saviour, the Head of the mystical Body, partake of the sanctity and strength of His will. His will is transcribed into them; they become partakers of the loves and the hatreds of Jesus Christ. Together with Him they love God and their neighbour, they hate sin and falsehood in all its forms. The will, according to the promise of God, becomes a law to itself. 'This is the testament which I will make unto them after those days, saith the Lord; giving My laws in their hearts, and in their minds I will write them.'¹⁴ And the Apostle says, 'The law is not made for the just man, but for the unjust and disobedient.'¹⁵ As the seven notes of the octave are not to be perpetually learned by the skilful musician, and the twenty-four letters of the alphabet are left behind by the cultivated intellect, so the law of commandments is no longer necessary to those who have the law of God written by the Holy Ghost upon their hearts. They fulfil, indeed, the letter of the commandments, because that is the least thing they can do; but that which is required of them is more than this. St. John says: 'Every one that is born of God, doth not commit sin, for

¹⁴ Heb. x. 16.

¹⁵ 1 Tim. i. 9.

His seed remaineth in him, and he cannot sin, because he is born of God ;¹⁶ that is, there grows up a moral impossibility to commit wilful sin. The love of God and our neighbour makes it morally impossible that we should abuse the freedom of our will by disobedience to God, and injustice to our neighbour. The hatred of sin, falsehood, impurity, jealousy, malice, and the like, makes it morally impossible for the soul, renewed by the indwelling of the Spirit of God, to violate its own renewed nature by willingly doing these things. Therefore, the will becomes a law to itself, and it is so strengthened in the state of regeneration that the Apostle could say : ‘ I can do all things in Him who strengtheneth me.’¹⁷ When buffeted by the messenger of Satan, he thrice prayed to be delivered from temptation ; but the answer of God to him was, ‘ My grace is sufficient for thee : for power is made perfect in infirmity ;’ and he adds : ‘ Gladly, therefore, will I glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may dwell in me.’¹⁸ And again, ‘ Work your salvation with fear and trembling ;’ and for what reason ? ‘ For it is God who worketh in you both to will and to accomplish,

¹⁶ 1 St. John iii. 9.¹⁷ Phil. iv. 13.¹⁸ 2 Cor. xii. 9.

according to His good will.¹⁹ The supremacy of the good will of God, holy, pure, just, and mighty, flows into the soul, and pervades the will of those who, being born again, are subject to the sovereignty of God by the free action and use of their own deliberate will.

5. Lastly, there is, as I have said before, a final relation of the will to God; and that is the state of the blessed, when there will be no more temptation without, no more conflict within. We shall then have passed from a state of warfare, and from the condition of wayfarers, into the eternal rest and peace, in the vision of God. The intellect, illuminated by the Light of God, which is the Holy Ghost Himself, shall see Him. The will, united with the eternal love of God by the Holy Ghost, who is the Charity of God, will be eternally and indissolubly united to Him in obedience and adoration of His perfect sovereignty, when God shall be all in all. This is the last and eternal perfection of the will.

To draw from this one practical conclusion, let us remember what is our probation now. It is to subject our will to the will of God. And

¹⁹ Phil. ii. 12, 13.

how does God illuminate us to know what that sovereignty is? I have already said, by faith. I have said that our submission to Him is the most rational and perfect act of our reason. Take, for example, the lights of nature, the existence of God, the distinctions of morality, the immortality of the soul. You would all hold, that any man who should refuse to submit his will to the sovereignty of God, revealing these things to us by the light of nature, would be guilty before Him of pride and infidelity. And why, but because the evidence for them is sufficient? Let us go one step farther. Is there not sufficient evidence in the world, by the lights of Christendom and by the effulgence of the Universal Church, which is 'like the lightning which cometh out of the east, and shineth also to the west'? Is not the testimony of the Universal Church throughout the world a sufficient light, or motive of credibility, to convince the intellect of man that that Church is the Church of God, and, therefore, that He founded it? Is not the world-wide testimony of the Church sufficient to convince any reasonable intellect, that He who founded it was the Son of God Incarnate; and that, according to the promise of the Son of

God, the Holy Ghost descended upon that Church, and made it His dwelling-place and the organ of His voice, in which He preserves the original revelation of God; and through which, as the organ of His voice, He makes that revelation known to the world? And if there be a sufficient light to know these things, is not the intellect bound to submit itself to the uncreated reason of God, by whom these things are revealed? And if so, is not the will, through the intellect, bound to submit itself to the light and sovereignty, which is thus made known? And if so, the voice of the Church is the voice of God Himself: ‘He that heareth you, heareth Me;’ and the authority of that voice is Divine, and the unity of truth is Divine, and the duty of submitting to it is from God. This light of faith comes to us through the most rational action of the human intellect, and this act of faith is an act reasonable and free in all its parts. Faith is not a credulity, nor a superstition; but they who will not believe are truly irrational and superstitious. They fall from perfect light into the twilight, where half-truths are seen, as ‘men like trees walking;’²⁰ and believing in them,

²⁰ St. Mark viii. 24.

the intellect is warped and narrowed. They who reject Divine faith credulously believe in human opinions, which are both false and superstitious. What, then, is the whole of our life on earth but an education? Is not the sovereignty of God round about us? Are we not under its guidance, training, and discipline? Is it not training us up to dwell in our Father's house? Are not all the visitations and chastisements of our lot so many teachings of His Divine hand? In joy and sorrow, prosperity and poverty, sickness or strength,—are not all these distinctly Divine agencies around us and upon us? Are they not the manifestations of the Divine sovereignty over the course of our life? And they who recognise, by the light of faith, the sovereignty of God in all things, will recognise the sovereignty of God in the daily and hourly details of their own personal life, and in the changes of their lot. They will not chafe against His will when He chastises them, nor wear themselves out, nor break their hearts by contending with impossibilities; but, conforming their will to the sovereign will of God, and submitting gladly to it, they will be sustained and sanctified in their faith.

And, further, there are two other ways in which the sovereignty of God works in us. The one is by the silent, secret, and sweet inspirations of His grace, by the lights that fall upon our intellect without our asking for them, and the love that is poured out in the Divine superabundance of His generosity and tenderness. As He makes the sun to rise upon the evil and the good, so He sends down the lights of truth on the intellects of those who have not sought for Him; and He pours out over their hearts the drops of consolation, of which the Psalmist speaks when he says, ‘Thou hast prevented him with blessings of sweetness.’²¹ This is something which, in experience, you all will know. You will understand me, though I cannot put it in words. There have been in your life times and seasons—sometimes in joy, sometimes in sorrow, sometimes in prayer, sometimes in solitude, sometimes in the midst of the world—when there has come down almost a sensible sweetness to your taste, almost a perceptible fragrance in your thoughts. And what is this sweetness and fragrance? It is the Divine Presence scattering abroad ‘the benedictions of sweetness.’ That fragrance comes from

²¹ Ps. xx. 4.

the golden censer which is in the hand of the angel before the throne. And why are these things sent to us? To win and to persuade our will freely to submit itself to His sovereignty. The throne of His sovereignty is the Blessed Sacrament upon the altar. The Sacred Heart of Jesus Christ our Lord and King is there always reigning, by the power of His love, attracting the human will in all its freedom to Himself. Out of the unwilling, He creates the willing; not by constraint, but by the sweetness of His Presence, which makes them voluntarily cast off their unbelief and disobedience, and of their own free will submit themselves to Him.

Lastly, when hereafter we shall stand before Him as our King and Judge, the Apostle St. James declares that we shall be 'judged by the law of liberty.'²² He bids us, therefore, to use it wisely: 'So speak ye and so do, as being to be judged by the law of liberty.' In that day we shall not be judged for anything we could not do or leave undone, nor for anything we could not know. We shall be judged for that which we might have known, and might have done or refrained from

²² St. James ii. 12.

doing. We shall be tried by that which we have known and done; and we shall be compelled to lay our hand upon our mouth, and to confess that, in all our life, we never did evil in thought, word, or deed, but we might have refrained from doing it, and might have done good instead, if we had had the will; that every act of evil was a free act, and an irrational and immoral abuse of our will.

Time forbids me now to draw out examples of this evident truth. Take any habit in which at this moment you may be entangled,—such as ambition, pride, sloth, self-indulgence, jealousy, insincerity, be it what it may,—tell me whether the first acts of it were not altogether voluntary, and the second and the third—ay, and the first, second, and third years of its continuance? If now it has become ingrained in your character—if now you have become, and are at this time, proud, ambitious, slothful, jealous, insincere, so that you cry in secret: ‘I am fast bound in these chains of iron: how can I ever break these bonds?’—know that you have forged them for yourselves, and at the last day will have to give an account of every several and voluntary act, whereby you have willingly wrought those links. You laid them upon

the anvil, and have deliberately welded them with your own hand, until by your own will you have fastened them upon yourselves.

Lastly, we shall have to give an account of all the good we have left undone; and it is certain that we neglect, all day long, opportunities of doing good, of making acts of love of God and of our neighbour. In that day our Lord will say to each one of us: ‘I was hungry, and you gave Me not to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me not to drink; I was a stranger, and you took Me not in; naked, and you clothed Me not; sick, and in prison, and you did not visit Me.’²³ All the day long, our life and lot are full of these opportunities, and we allow them to pass away. They are golden opportunities, like the seed-time and the harvest, which, with all their treasures, pass with the year and return no more. We shall have to give an account in that day of the free use we have made of all our manifold stewardship: of the gifts of nature; of the faculties of the soul; of the graces of the Holy Ghost; of the providences of God over our life; of the opportunities which have been so countless

²³ St. Matt. xxv. 42, 43.

and so fertile, surpassing even our recognition; and of all the loving visitations of God, whereby He would have brought us to Himself.

Remember the words you have said this morning, and before you lie down will say again to-night. Remember the obedience of Jesus, when on your knees you say the prayer which He has taught us: 'Thy kingdom come'—let Thy sovereignty reign over my will. 'Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven,'—let Thy most holy, most sweet, most perfect will be done in me, and by me, and about me, in all things, and always, now and for ever.

LECTURE III.

THE SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD OVER SOCIETY.

‘Behold, a King shall reign in justice, and princes shall rule in judgment.’ Isaias xxxii. 1.

WHATSOEVER may be the first and typical fulfilment of this prophecy, no one can fail to see its true and ultimate fulfilment in the kingdom of Jesus Christ. It is a vision of that which is singular upon earth—a just king; that is, a king who, holding supreme power, reflects not only the authority of the King of kings, but also His character. Such a one is a king after God’s own heart. Justice is the sum of the perfections of God, the bond of all the Divine attributes of wisdom, power, mercy, and sanctity. A just king, therefore, is one who, having supreme authority, uses it in wisdom, mercy, and equity. David’s highest title of glory was, that he was a man after God’s own heart. His

heart was conformed to the King of kings, and in the exercise of his power, in making and in executing his laws, he manifested that heart of justice to his people. Such a kingdom is a kingdom of order, peace, liberty, and equality; because, whatever be their social and accidental inequalities, all subjects are, by the supreme authority, treated equally before the law.

Such, then, is the vision of the prophecy; and it is more than a prophecy—it is a promise. It not only foretells that such a kingdom of justice shall be, but it promises that that kingdom shall exist on earth.

Now, I have already spoken to you of the sovereignty of God over the intellect and over the will of individual men. Our submission to this sovereignty is, I explained, by the act of faith, in response to the command of God that we should believe; and by an act of obedience to His Divine will, as it is revealed to us, in response to the commandment that we should obey. What I have now to do is to extend this subject; and these two primary truths lie at the base of what I am about to add—I mean, the sovereignty of God over society.

Society is a collection of individuals, not told by number, but united, ordered, and organised by an intrinsic law of their nature. For when God made man, He made society. Society was a part of the first creation; society springs out of the creation of man, because from man comes the family, and from the family comes the people, and from the people comes the State. The whole civil order of the world is nothing but the growth of that society which lay in the first man, as the tree lies in the seed. Therefore in our very nature there is the society of mankind; and, as I said before, society does not mean merely men told by the head. Numbers do not constitute a people. That which constitutes a people is the principle of order, authority, and law, social relations, social rights, social duty. Where those things are not, or are trampled down, there may be a multitude, but there cannot be a people. The gospel of the present day is not the gospel of the society which God created, but the gospel of anarchy. It declares that the multitude of men, told by number and voting by plebiscites, constitutes society. Therefore when I say that God has a sovereignty over society, I mean that He has a sovereignty over

those ordered relations of man to man, constituted by Himself in the creation of mankind. The first principle, then, of society is authority; the second is obedience; and the third is mutual justice, whatsoever be the varied, accidental, and providential inequalities between man and man.

I affirm, then, that there is in this world, in the order of nature, such a society as I have described. And as the Son of God Incarnate redeemed mankind by His precious Blood, so He has purchased for Himself, not only man with his individual intellect and will, but also the collective society of man as God created it. What we call Christianity is, in fact, the sovereignty of Jesus Christ over mankind. In so far as men are Christian, they are subjects of Jesus Christ; and in so far as they revolt from Him, they are but rebels, because He is the King of that society *de jure*, that is, by right, and *de facto*, that is, in fact. He is *de jure*, by right, King over every baptised soul; and He is not only *de jure*, but *de facto*, King over all those that are faithful to His laws. Those who, being baptised, rebel against His laws, are no longer subject to Him *de facto*; but they are subject *de jure*, that is, by right, be-

cause they have been redeemed by Him and regenerated in baptism. What, then, I purpose to show is, that there exists in the world a kingdom of which Jesus Christ is the King, and that He has a sovereignty, and exercises that sovereignty over it. The confusions we see in the world are no contradiction to what I have said—that He is, both by right and by fact, King and Sovereign over those who are faithful to His laws. He is sovereign still by right—though, through their rebellion, not sovereign by fact—over those who break those laws.

Bear in mind, I am speaking of this kingdom as God has made it, and not as man has marred it. The kingdom, as God made it, I will now go on to describe; that kingdom, as man has marred it, will be our subject hereafter.

1. First, then, when the Son of God became incarnate, He came into the world, and gathered His disciples about Him. In that act He founded His kingdom. The preaching of John was: ‘The kingdom of heaven is at hand.’¹ The kingdom of heaven came when God was manifested in the flesh, by His death redeemed the world, by His

¹ St. Matt. iii. 2.

resurrection vindicated His sovereignty, and by His ascension took possession of His throne. By His Incarnation He had deified the nature of man, and not only restored, but elevated, man above his previous state in creation. He elevated not only man, but the society of man, which, as I said, lies in man's very nature. The first Adam was mere man, united with God indeed; but through his disobedience he wrecked himself, and in himself, all the society of mankind. The second Adam is the Son of God Incarnate, in whom man is not only redeemed and elevated, but the whole society of mankind also; and neither man nor the society of man can again be wrecked, in so far as it is obedient and faithful to the Incarnate Son of God.

I will say, then, for clearness' sake, that the society He founded is His mystical Body, or the Church, as we shall hereafter see. Our Divine Lord restored man and society in His person when He deified our manhood, our intelligence, heart, will, our whole nature, soul and body. When He gathered His disciples about Him, He elevated them also. He illuminated them with the knowledge of God and His kingdom; He in-

fused into them the grace of His Holy Spirit; He shed abroad in their heart the law of love to God and man; He inspired their will with the law of obedience; He elevated them above the natural state in which they were born. 'That which is born of the flesh is flesh,' and such they were at their first birth. 'That which is born of the Spirit is spirit,' and such they were by contact with the Son of God in the regeneration. And being elevated to a higher state of faith, light, love, and obedience, He assimilated them to Himself; He changed them into His own likeness. The first Adam was defaced and disfigured, the image and likeness of God in him were shattered; but the likeness and image of God were manifested again, in their perfection, in the face of Jesus Christ. As St. Paul says: 'God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ.'² Again he says: 'We all, beholding the glory of the Lord with face uncovered, are transformed into the same image from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord.'³ And St. John writes: 'We saw His glory, the

² 2 Cor. iv. 6.³ Ibid. iii. 18.

glory as of the Only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. . . . And of His fulness we all have received, and grace for grace;⁴ that is to say, the fellowship of the disciples with their Lord, His daily conversation with them, the assimilating power of His life and of His example, transformed them. Their heart, mind, and will were gradually transfigured into His own likeness; and as He changed them into His own likeness, so He united them together. They became of one mind, one heart, one will; they had one faith, one vision of God, one Guide, one Teacher, one law. There was wrought in them an internal change, which perfectly united them one with another; so that their thoughts, affections, volitions, being subject by faith to the sovereignty of their Divine Master, were assimilated to each other. There grew up an internal unity in the hearts of the disciples; and therefore the external unity with which they adhered to Him and to one another, was the result and consequence of this intrinsic unity of mind and will. He thus organised them together. He made one of them to be the first, and all the rest to be equal. He gave to that one a chief authority, and

⁴ St. John i. 14, 16.

He gave to them all a participation, not of that sole primacy, but of all other powers which He gave to Peter, and so knit them into one perfect society, of which He Himself was the visible Head whilst on earth, and His Vicar when He ascended into heaven. This is what we call His Church, or Mystical Body.

When He ascended into heaven and sent the Holy Ghost, His disciples and all who believed in Him were united to Him by the indwelling of the Spirit of God. He thereby became their Head. They became His members, and were members one with another in one organised body, so compacted and fitted together, that as the body of a man, quickened and animated by one life, grows to its perfection, so with the Mystical Body of Christ. He bestowed on it a participation of His own prerogatives: it became imperishable, because He has immortal life; it became indissolubly one, because He is the only Son of God; it became infallible, because He is the Divine Truth, and cannot err; it became sovereign in the world, because it is the representative of Himself, and, in His Name, exercises His sovereignty among the nations of the earth.

Such, then, was the first founding of His kingdom. In its expansion afterwards, when He said to His disciples: ‘All power in heaven and earth is given unto Me: go ye, therefore, and teach all nations,’ He claimed sovereignty in the most ample and explicit terms. He who has all authority, lacks nothing. There is no power supreme over Him who has all authority. And having all power, He therefore said to them: ‘I dispose unto you a kingdom, as My Father hath disposed unto Me.’ More explicit language could not be found to declare that the power which He gave to His Apostles was a royal power; that it was a participation of His own sovereignty, and given in virtue of the right of delegation which He received from His Father. When He said: ‘My kingdom is not of this world,’ He did not intend—as some blindly and almost incomprehensibly misunderstand Him—that He denied His kingdom to be in this world. He affirmed it to be in this world, but not of it; that is, that the source of its authority, the fountain of its jurisdiction, the sanctions of its laws, the powers of its executive, are from His Eternal Father. It therefore does not derive its authority, sovereignty, juris-

diction, powers, rights, from this world. All these are not of men, but of God. They are not the grants or concessions of kings, princes, legislatures; nor do they come from the multitude by universal suffrage. They are of God, delegations of the Eternal King to His Incarnate Son. They are supernatural, Divine, intangible by human control, imperishable, sovereign over all.

2. When, therefore, He sent out His Apostles, it was to execute the same commission He had received Himself. What He was among the Apostles, they were to be among the nations of the world. They began by elevating men and families wheresoever they went. They communicated the same light, faith, grace, and laws, which they had first received. The illumination of faith, the gift of regeneration, the grace of the Holy Sacraments, the laws of the kingdom of God, the Ten Commandments interpreted not in the letter only but in the spirit, the Two Precepts of Charity, the Eight Beatitudes; these were the laws of the heavenly kingdom, and these the Apostles gave to the nations of the world. The nations of the world, so far as they

received those laws, were elevated to a higher order, and were assimilated to the Master from whom those laws were derived. As the faith and the laws of Christianity took possession of men, of households, and of people, they were conformed to the same pattern and the same perfection. When the Apostle said: 'Be ye also followers of me, as I also am of Christ,'⁵ he meant to say: 'In me you see the dimmed and imperfect reflection of that perfect image and pattern which I am bid to represent; follow me, as I follow Christ. I am indeed among you as an example, so far as I truly represent Him to whom all men, illuminated by faith, are to be conformed—the Second Adam, the Son of God, who is now at the right hand of His Father.' As they were assimilated to that type, they were united together by the infused grace of charity, and by the supernatural union, which drew the world to believe in the Unity of God. That supernatural and miraculous union of the first Christians was the testimony and proof of the Unity of God, from whom they received their law. As our Divine Lord prayed to His Father: 'That they also may be one in Us, that the world

⁵ 1 Cor. xi. 1.

may believe that Thou hast sent Me.’⁶ And the world beheld in wonder, if it did not yet believe. The world acknowledged this supernatural unity, saying: ‘See how these Christians love one another.’ It was a phenomenon never seen before, a fruit that never grew on any other tree, since sin cursed the earth. As they were united, so they were organised together; and there grew up in the world the true Vine and the branches,—the one world-wide organisation, the one life-giving society of men—united by baptism, faith, and worship; by submission to one authority; by the recognition of one visible Head—the sole fountain of supernatural knowledge and supernatural power. There was one hand which held the two keys of jurisdiction and of science—that is, of supreme power and of the perfect knowledge of faith: and that one hand was the hand of him who bears the representative character of the Vicar of his Divine Master. In this organisation—which, being visible, speaks to the eye, and having a living voice speaks audibly to the ear—there was a work of God’s grace, even more supernatural, more perfect, and more marvellous. The Church has a visible body;

⁶ St. John xvii. 21.

so had the old Roman Empire; so has now the Empire of Britain: but the Church has what they had not—it has a soul, and that soul consists in a spiritual unity, which emanates from God the Holy Ghost, who dwells in it, and animates it by faith, hope, and charity—by the seven gifts of the Holy Ghost, by the eight Beatitudes in their ripeness and perfection, by the law of charity to God and man—thereby producing a perfect internal unity of mind, intellect, conscience, and will, which God alone can create. This unity of the Church, both external and internal, which the world is always endeavouring to destroy, yet can neither destroy nor deny, stands perpetually in the world as the Visible Witness of the sovereignty of Jesus Christ. But we have not yet reached to the full meaning of these words.

3. I have, thus far, described the Church in its root, as our Lord planted it; and in its extension, as the Apostles spread it abroad. Thenceforward it has grown as a tree, rising in stature and strength, overshadowing the whole world. But the action of the Church among the nations has been to create the Christian world. By the Christian world, I mean that the Church has pervaded, pene-

trated, and outwardly governed races and nations of men, who are not all internally obedient by faith and charity to the laws of grace. More than this, it has controlled the material power, the physical or brute force of mankind. There are but two kinds of force in the world—material and moral; and the force of the sovereignty of Jesus Christ is the moral force of law and right. The force of man is the force of his arm, of his will, of combination, coercion, criminal codes, capital punishment, warfare, conflicts between nation and nation until one beats the other down and tramples in its blood. This is the sovereign power of mankind, unrestrained by the sovereignty of Jesus Christ. Such it was before that sovereignty was revealed from heaven; such it would be again, if that sovereignty could ever cease; such it is always and everywhere, in proportion as that sovereignty grows weak in its control over the hearts of men.

This moral power of law and right, first acting upon individuals, then upon households, then upon cities, then upon races, began to create the new Christian civilisation. The Church possessed, in the time of St. Gregory the Great, three-and-twenty provinces. The possessions over which

the Vicar of Jesus Christ ruled, until sacrilege robbed him the other day, were called the Patrimony of the Church; and some twenty-three like to it were possessed by St. Gregory the Great. They extended over the greater part of Italy, the south of France, along the shores of the Adriatic, the north of Africa, Sicily, the islands of the Mediterranean. Divine providence so ordered that these patrimonies, being committed to the patriarchal care and government of the Vicar of Jesus Christ, should become the first portions of human society which were reduced to obedience to the Christian law. In these patrimonies the germs of Christian civilisation were planted. They first received the Christian law of marriage, the abolition of slavery, Christian education of children, just arbitration of Christian judges, mutual respect, fair dealing between man and man. They became the first provinces of that Christian world which has now grown up into the maturity of Christendom. There is not to be found in history anything more beautiful, more patriarchal, or reflecting more brightly the peaceful and majestic justice of our Divine Lord in the Mountain, legislating in the eight Beatitudes, than the paternal

sway of St. Gregory the Great, the Apostle of England. Those twenty-three patrimonies of the Church, as I have said elsewhere,⁷ wrought as the leaven in the meal; and the Christian civilisation ripened in them, became the germ of the Christian civilisation which afterwards formed the nations of Christian Europe. Where, then, were Spain, France, Germany, and England? They were races, divided in conflict. Some were wild in their ferocity; others had sunk again into paganism; some had not yet emerged from it. There was then no Christian Europe, such as we now know it. St. Gregory the Great ruled over those patrimonies, and ripened the first spring of the Christian world. He sowed broadcast in the furrows of Europe those seeds of Christian progress and order of which men at this day are so proud, though they are trampling them down. Then the nations began to spring—Lombardy, Spain, France, Germany, and England. It was the action of the Vicar of Jesus Christ which made them what they are. Spain was torn by heresy, invaded by Saracens, infected by Judaism, divided into conflicting kingdoms, when the Councils of

⁷ *Four Evils of the Day*, pp. 85, 86.

Toledo, legislating by the precepts of the Christian law, knit together the many races of the peninsula into one great people. So it was in England. The Heptarchy was in perpetual conflict, seven kingdoms warring against each other, until Christianity, entering and subduing them to one faith, one law, one supreme Pastor, blended them into one; and the Christian monarchy of England arose, and endures to this day. So was it with other nations of our Christian world. And after this was done, another work began: they were then united together, and Christendom arose. What the Church had done in Spain and England, it did throughout the whole of Europe. It knit the nations together into a federation of Christian kingdoms and people, and created the unity and order of Christendom, which is the manifestation of the sovereignty of Jesus Christ over the civil powers of the world. But this subject is too large: I can but sum it up in these few words.

What has the world, then, gained by the sovereignty of Jesus Christ? The extinction of slavery,—and let any man weigh what those words mean, remembering what slavery was in

the ancient world. Secondly, the sanctification of Christian households, by the laws of domestic purity and the laws of marriage. Thirdly, the Christian education of children. Fourthly, the redemption of woman; the raising her from the degradation in which she was before her regeneration in Christ, to be the handmaid of the Immaculate Mother of God, and to be respected by men, as being the image of the Mother of their Redeemer. Once more, the restraining of warfare, which before was the lawless and brute violence of men and nations, without recognition of mercy and justice. War itself was tempered with mercy under the legislation of the Church and the supreme arbitrament of the Vicar of Jesus Christ. Again, the civil code of every country, which still retained, even in its Christianity, the severity and sanguinary rigour of its past, was gradually mitigated from age to age, until the severities of the old world were in great measure effaced. In passing, let me protest against a common and monstrous inversion of the truth. The Church is accused of sanctioning and encouraging severities in the criminal code, which the milder legislation of princes has mitigated. The Church always

restrained the severities of law to the utmost of its power, from age to age ; but the hands of men in iron mail were too heavy to be stayed by the light pastoral staff of the Church. The Church would have extinguished long ago the cruelties of the penal code, if it had obtained the power. There was also introduced into the society of men a quality never known before—the charity of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. The manifold compassion of the Good Shepherd and of the Good Physician, —tenderness to the sick, to the sorrowing, to the orphan, to the widow, to the prisoner, to the outcast, to the poor,—these are the ripe fruits of the Sermon on the Mount, and come from no other tree. Again, mutual respect among all classes and ranks of men. When I say respect, I do not mean only or chiefly the respect of the lower for those above them, but I mean emphatically the respect of those in authority for those who are beneath them, because they see in them the image of God, and the purchase of the Precious Blood of Jesus Christ.

These, then, are some of the fruits of the Christian civilisation, which the world had never known before. The sovereignty of Jesus Christ

consists therefore in this: that whereas, in the order of nature, there was a human society such as I first described, and whereas in the order which is supernatural there is a society created by our Divine Lord Himself—which is His Church—the sovereignty of Jesus Christ consists in the union of those two creations of God; in their perfect amity, intimate concord, mutual co-operation, united recognition of One Master, One Lord, One Sovereign; or, in other words, that what is called the Church and State form one sovereignty, under one Supreme Head. Woe to the man, woe to the people, that preach their separation! Woe to the world, when they shall be separated! The prophet Isaias, foretelling the sovereignty of this Just King, describes it thus: ‘The land that was desolate and impassable shall be glad; and the wilderness shall rejoice, and shall flourish like the lily. It shall bud forth and blossom, and shall rejoice with joy and praise. The glory of Libanus is given to it; the beauty of Carmel, and Saron; they shall see the glory of the Lord, and the beauty of our God.’⁸ And again he says, speaking of the man of faith: ‘His eyes shall see the king

⁸ Isaias xxxv. 1, 2.

in his beauty.⁹ Who is the king but Jesus Christ? what is the beauty but the manifestation of His kingdom? Perhaps some will say: ‘Yes, in heaven.’ I answer: ‘Yes; but also upon earth; or what do you mean day by day in praying, “Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven”?’ To be blind to God’s kingdom in the midst of us is Judaism. When the Messiah came, the men of Jerusalem were looking for a king of glory. When He came in humiliation, they did not know Him. As the Apostle says: ‘For if they had known it, they would never have crucified the Lord of glory.’¹⁰ Men are now going the same way; they are postponing the manifestation of His kingdom to the future,—shutting it up in the unseen world, that it may not trouble our peace with its justice or disturb our politics with its authority.

There are two consequences to be drawn from what I have said. The one is this; that though His kingdom—as our Lord Himself said—is not of this world, it is nevertheless here as the sphere of its manifestation. The kingdom of Jesus Christ, then, the Church and the

⁹ Isaias xxxiii. 17.

¹⁰ 1 Cor. ii. 8.

Christian world, are here and visible ; and they are not only here and visible, but they are local. Under the Old Law, Jerusalem was the head of Israel, the centre from which the Law went forth ; there was the sanctuary and the priesthood ; there too was the Temple, in which the high-priest ministered ; and all this was typical. ‘For the law having a shadow of good things to come, not the very image of the things,’¹¹ the substance came under the New Law. What, then, corresponds now to Jerusalem under the Old Law ? It is the cant of controversy, it is the affectation of scepticism, for any man to shut his eyes and pretend that Christendom, which he admits to have a circumference, has no centre. It is the audacity of unbelief to say, that the centre has been any other than Rome. No man, with the page of history before him, can find any other solution of the things I have been saying, except in the history of the Pontiffs, the Vicars of Jesus Christ. Rome is visibly and self-evidently the head and centre of the Christian order. Rome is as surely the seat of the sovereignty of God in the Church of all nations, as Jerusalem

¹¹ Heb. x. 1.

was in that of the Jews. The Vicar of the Incarnate Word dwells there by the dispensation of Divine Providence. The world has striven to cast him out for eighteen centuries, and has never been able to displace him. Five-and-forty times it has striven to drive him out, or to keep him out, or to overturn the throne of the Vicar of Jesus Christ; but in vain. If he disappear for a moment, in a little while he is to be found once more reigning at the Tomb of the Apostles. If he be absent for half a century, his return is only the more supernatural. Such is the mere matter of fact. But I will go on to something that men will not deny. Rome has been the Mother of Churches. It may not, indeed, have been the Mother of all the Churches, because the Apostles went out from Jerusalem, and the disciples were first called Christians at Antioch. But if Rome has not been the Mother of all the Churches of the East, assuredly it is the Mother of the Churches of the West. It is the Mother of the Christianity of Ireland, of England, of Germany; and so I might go on. It has been the Mother of the Churches of the West, and the Foster-mother of the Churches of the world. It has ever been and

ever must be the Teacher and Guide of Churches, the Chief Witness of the Incarnation, the Chief Apostle of what our Lord taught, of what our Lord commanded; the Chief Judge of all controversies, the Chief Interpreter of the faith, the Chief Doctor and Pastor of the Universal Church. So the Council of Florence declares, and so the Council of the Vatican the other day expounded, with a voice which is infallible, in virtue of that same special promise of Divine assistance made by the Son of God to Peter, and in him to all who sit in his seat for ever.

Not only so, but, as I have already very briefly traced, Rome is the mother of nations. If it be Christianity which has civilised the world, it is Rome which has sustained Christianity. The patrimonies of the Church were the seed-plot of Europe. And for all these causes and reasons, Rome is the capital of Christendom. It was never the capital of Italy. When Italy and Rome were one, Italy was united to Rome, and not Rome to Italy. Rome had a world-wide empire, of which Italy was a part. The claim of that part to appropriate Rome is a stupendous usurpation. It is a usurpation upon your rights, and upon mine, and upon

the rights of every Christian nation and every Christian man under heaven.

From east to west, the whole of Christendom claims Rome as its head and as its home; and every nation throughout the world goes up to Rome, as the tribes of Israel went up to Jerusalem. God has so ordered it. There are two special reasons why we hold it so to be, both as matter of faith and as matter of principle.

First, God has so ordered the organisation, constitution, and authority of His visible Church on earth. He has made Rome the seat of the Vicar of His Incarnate Son; and from that seat or throne goes forth the supreme authority both of jurisdiction and of doctrine, whereby the purity and the liberty of the Church throughout the world are perpetually preserved. Satan is wise enough to know that, if he can strike a blow on the head, he is inflicting a deadly wound upon the whole body; and for that reason the warfare from the beginning has been against Rome. This is one reason.

The other is, that Rome is the bond or link between the two societies, natural and supernatural, of which I have been speaking. In the

one person who is both Pontiff and King, the two societies and the two authorities in the world, spiritual and temporal, are united. The union of these is, as we have seen, the will and purpose of our Divine Redeemer. We therefore insist upon it as a matter of principle. Every power, whatsoever it be, that attempts to dissolve the union which God has created, is fighting against God. We contend for this, not so much for the sake of the Church, which is imperishable and will live to the end of the world in all the plenitude of its majesty, as for the sake of the civil society of mankind, which, as we shall see hereafter, when separated from Christianity, will go to dissolution.

What, then, is it that men call the temporal power of the Pope? We are weary of the words. It simply means this,—the union, in one person, of the supreme authority which links together the two societies God has created for the sanctification of mankind. You know full well there never was any period of Christianity in which the spiritual authority of Rome first, and next its temporal power, has not been the special object of assault. You know the events at this moment.

Do not be afraid. Fear nothing. As long as the Christian world exists, the Christian world will recognise Jesus Christ to be the Son of God, and the Pontiff to be His Vicar. It will obey the law of justice which consecrates the providential order whereby he is a sovereign among kings. Though this may be overclouded for a moment, as it has been forty times before, and may be a hundred, it will not be destroyed. If it were, the Christian world would have committed suicide ; but I have better hopes. Let us not fear, then. The Scottish nation, when, by an unhappy vehemence, they cast off their obedience to the Vicar of Jesus Christ, and also the authority of the bishops who were set over them, had the faith and the wisdom to retain two things, which they hold fast to this day—the absolute independence of man and of conscience, in all things spiritual, of all civil powers ; and also what they call, in true and expressive language, ‘ the crown-rights of Jesus Christ ;’ that is to say, the sovereignty of our Divine Lord, and of His kingdom, over all rulers and civil laws. Seeing a great nation retain these two principles, we may hope for it.

You, as children of the Catholic Church, have

not only retained these things, but you have retained them with the pastoral care of the Apostles, and with the supreme authority of the Vicar of Jesus Christ. You owe him, therefore, fidelity, obedience of heart, mind, and will, submission of intellect and of all your powers to the revealed law of God. You owe him a generous obedience. That which we call the spirit of a good Catholic means a generous love and generous fidelity, as to the Delegate of a Divine Master and a Divine King, who is our King by right and by fact. Honour him, then; love him, and obey him. The desolate and impassable land, which once blossomed as the lily, is growing desolate and impassable once more. Wars choke up its highways, armed men are upon all its paths, desolation and barrenness are where the smiling fields and waving harvests were a year ago; and this is a type of the Christian world as it is before God. The glory of Libanus, and the beauty of Saron and of Carmel, are trampled down; but be not afraid. The words of the prophet are the words of God: 'I beheld in the visions of the night, and lo, one like the Son of Man came in the clouds of heaven, and He came even to the Ancient of Days; and they presented

Him before Him. And He gave Him power, and glory, and a kingdom; and all peoples, tribes, and tongues shall serve Him: His power is an everlasting power, that shall not be taken away; and His kingdom that shall not be destroyed.¹²

¹² Daniel vii. 13, 14.

LECTURE IV.

THE SOVEREIGNTY OF THE DIVINE HEAD OF THE CHURCH.

‘I am the Resurrection and the Life: he that believeth in Me, although he be dead, shall live: and every one that liveth, and believeth in Me, shall not die for ever.’ St. John xi. 25, 26.

IN the end of the Sabbath, and in the dawn of the morning, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to the sepulchre. And there was a great earthquake. The angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and rolled away the stone from the door of the sepulchre, and sat upon it. His face was as the lightning, and his raiment white as snow; and for fear of him, the soldiers who kept the sepulchre trembled, and were as dead men. And he said to the women: Fear not you, for ye

seek Jesus who was crucified. He is not here. He is risen. Come, see the place where the Lord was laid.

In this was fulfilled the declaration of Jesus by the tomb of Lazarus : ‘I am the Resurrection and the Life.’ He did not say: ‘I will give life, I will raise from the dead.’ He said: ‘I am the Life, I am the Resurrection; the Life and the Resurrection are Myself.’ That is: ‘I am Who am, the Self-existent, the Life and the Life-giver.’ The Life is God, and God is the Life of all things. He is the Fountain of life; and He who is the Fountain of life is alone the Resurrection. He who can give life is alone He who can restore life. To do this is a Divine and sovereign act, and is the prerogative of God only. Therefore, by the Resurrection, our Divine Lord is manifested in His Godhead, in the sovereignty of His power, in His victory over sin and death, and in His royalty over the creation of God. This is also the meaning of His words when He said: ‘I am the Good Shepherd. The Good Shepherd giveth His life for His sheep. . . Therefore doth My Father love Me, because I lay down My life, that I may take it again. No man taketh it away from Me: I lay

it down of Myself, and I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again.”¹ His Incarnation, His Death, His Resurrection, were all alike sovereign acts of Divine will and of Divine power.

1. In His Incarnation, by an act of His own Divine will, He took our humanity, assuming the intelligence of a human soul, and uniting it with the Uncreated Intelligence, which is the Son of God; and in assuming a human soul like ours—a soul perfect in reason, heart, and will—He beatified it; that is, it was admitted to the Beatific Vision and to the Beatific Union. His manhood was elevated above the order of nature. It was deified, but it was human still. In assuming a human soul, He likewise assumed a human body, and in all things a body like our own—with the same flesh, and bones, and nerves, and blood; with the same susceptibility of suffering, the same capacity of pain, of hunger, thirst, sorrow, weariness, passion, and death. And because He took to Himself a human nature whole and perfect, there were two natures alike whole and perfect—Godhead and manhood united in One Person. No human person

¹ St. John x. 11-18.

was there, but One only Person, and that Divine—God Himself Incarnate. Over the Divine countenance He drew the veil of His humanity, so that the splendour and glory of His Person were hidden from the eyes of men. On Mount Tabor, for a moment, the light of His majesty was seen; but in the years of His humiliation, His humanity alone was manifest to sense. The veil was upon the face of His Godhead.

2. As, then, the assumption of our humanity was an act of His free and sovereign will, so also was the laying down of His life. He gave Himself to suffer. He gave His Body to the scourge, and to the thorns, and to the nails. He was furrowed, pierced, and wounded by the instruments of passion. His Precious Blood streamed from Him, His vital spirit was drained away. He gave His Soul to three and thirty years of mental sorrows, and to His dereliction in the Garden, and to the darkness of His agony. When the hour was come, by His own free sovereign will He untied the knot of Almighty power, whereby body and soul, in man, are joined together. The 'silver cord' was broken, and He bowed His head, and by a sovereign act gave up the ghost. The Passion was

indeed a sufficient cause of death to any human nature: nevertheless, His dying was voluntary; for He had power to sustain His human life; but, by His own free, sovereign will, He withheld that sustaining power, and by a voluntary act gave up the ghost.

3. And as He laid down His life by a free act of His own will, so He resumed it again. In the moment when the Divine Soul of Jesus parted from the Body, it passed for ever from the desolation of His agony into the light of the Vision of God. Throughout His earthly life of sorrow He was at all times in the Vision of God. In the hour of His desolation, He willingly hid it from Him; but when that passing cloud upon the light of His soul was over, He entered again and for ever into the light of bliss. The deified human soul of Jesus in that moment entered, in our behalf, into the final possession and the eternal fruition of the glory of God. The light of the Sun of Justice then arose upon the world unscen. The realms beyond the grave—where the patriarchs, prophets, saints, martyrs, penitents of the Old Law, waited for the Redeemer—were illuminated by His coming; the invisible world, which in our Creed

we call Hell ; the realm of the departed, in which were waiting together—though separate and distinct in state—the saints of the kingdom of grace, though the kingdom of God was not yet opened ; those also who were purifying and expiating for the Vision of God, to be revealed hereafter ; and those who were lost eternally.

To all He was made known : to the saints as their Redeemer, fulfilling the promise made to the faithful who had looked for Him from the beginning of the world ; to the penitent, who had turned in hope to the promise of a Redeemer ; and to the lost, who would not believe the Word of God. To them was revealed the light of the truth and of the majesty of God against whom they had sinned. They had in their day received light enough to know Him, and grace enough in all hours, and in all temptations, to have turned from sin to God, and to have attained salvation, had they only been willing to be saved.

While this Divine work was accomplishing, the Body was taken from the Cross ; but never for one moment was either the body or the soul of His humanity separated from the Godhead of the Eternal Son. The body and soul were parted in-

deed from each other in natural death, but the body and soul were alike united indissolubly by the Hypostatic Union—that is, by the personal assumption of our manhood into God—to the Person of the Eternal Son. From the moment of the Incarnation to all eternity, Jesus remains the same indissolubly, two natures in one Person. As the Soul of Jesus in the world unseen was a manifestation of God, so the Body which hung lifeless on the Cross—the lifeless form which, when the nails were drawn from the hands and feet, was lowered into the bosom of His Immaculate Mother—was the Body of the Incarnate Son of God. With loving care it was swathed in the grave clothes, it was anointed with the ointments, it was embalmed with the spices, it was borne lovingly to the tomb, and laid in the sepulchre upon the mouth of which the stone was laid. But it was not ointments or spices that embalmed that Sacred Body: there was no need of them to stay corruption; over that Body corruption had no power because union with the Godhead sustained its incorruption. The true embalming of that Sacred Flesh was its union with the Godhead; and that Sacred Flesh was incorruptible because the Son

of God, by His sovereign will, stayed the progress of the dishonours of the grave.

Then came the re-assumption, by the same free act of His sovereign power. All through that night, while the watches were set, and the guards kept the sepulchre, and the seals remained unbroken upon the stone, there was light, and worship, and watching, and energy within the tomb. Within that closed sepulchre there was a Divine power, the presence of the Son of God, who, having laid down His life, was preparing to take it up again. The Divine creating power which had fashioned His own humanity, restored it again from the wounds and dishonours of His Passion. The Divine will smoothed out the furrows of the scourge, healed the piercing of the thorns, closed the wounds of the nails, and effaced from His Sacred Flesh all tokens of humiliation, save only the five Sacred Wounds in hands, and feet, and side, which still remain, and in eternity will remain for ever, as the tokens of our redemption and the pledges of His everlasting love. When that Sacred Flesh was once more restored to its perfection and glory, the Divine soul of Jesus clothed itself therewith as with a garment.

As in the moment of the Incarnation He arrayed Himself in our humanity, so once more, in the tomb, He took up again that Sacred Body, re-animated it, quickened it again in every pulse, and in every vibration of its human life. He raised it to a state of immortality; He elevated it above the conditions of nature. He passed out of that tomb before the stone was rolled from its mouth, before the seals were broken. By His Divine Omnipotence He passed forth, because that which was mortal had become immortal; that which had been passible was now impassible; that which was before as our nature in the state of death, had become subtle and glorious. He endowed His Body with the four gifts of glory which He has promised to us all. That which shall be the inheritance of all His members, He first assumed to Himself.

Such, then, was the resurrection of Jesus Christ. He had laid down His life, and He took it up again, fulfilling His promise, 'I am the Resurrection, I am the Life.' In Him all men shall rise. 'As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. The first man is of the earth, earthly; the second man from heaven, heavenly.

As is the earthly, so are the earthly; as is the heavenly, so are the heavenly.'

In His Resurrection we all partake. 'Christ is risen from the dead, the first-fruits of them that sleep.'² All who live by Him, and by vital union are united with Him, rise together with Him; and therefore the Apostle says: 'If you be risen with Christ, seek the things that are above; where Christ is sitting at the right hand of God. Mind the things that are above, not the things that are on the earth; for you are dead, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.'³ And again he says, that God has raised Him up, 'and hath raised us up together, and hath made us sit together in the heavenly places.'⁴

The power of the resurrection of Jesus is upon every member of His Body: it is upon every one of you. In your baptism you were grafted into Christ; and if you be living members of His Body, the life of the Resurrection flowed into you: 'Know you not that you are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?'⁵ If any man have not the Spirit of Christ in him, he

² 1 Cor. xv. 20.

³ Col. iii. 1-3.

⁴ Ephes. ii. 6.

⁵ 1 Cor. iii. 16.

is none of His; but if He be in you, then being buried by baptism to death, you will also rise up with Him, by the power of Him who raised Jesus from the dead.

The plain consequence of this teaching is full of joy and of consolation.

First, it pledges to every one of us a resurrection hereafter to perfection and glory, the same as that of Jesus Himself, identical in all its circumstances. We are conquerors in Him, by Him, with Him, and through Him, over sin and death. If sin have no power over our will, death will have no power over our body or our soul, for we are made partakers of the first resurrection; and ‘Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection; in these the second death hath no power.’⁶ That is, if the resurrection of your baptism, and the indwelling of the Holy Ghost, and the risen life of Jesus Christ in your mortal body, be the law, and the rule, and the power which sustains you, then the death of the body is but a resting, a momentary passing sleep.

Jesus has plucked out the sting of death; for the sting of death is sin, and He has thereby turned

⁶ Apoc. xx. 6.

death into slumber. Therefore Christians call their burial-places ‘cemeteries,’—sleeping-places, places of rest, of sweet, kindly, refreshing repose, after the toil of life is done. Therefore the living memories of those whom the world calls dead, and the Church knows to be alive, are ever fresh and vivid in the hearts of Christians. Therefore also the Communion of Saints—which the dull-hearted, cold-hearted world, with its clogged understanding, cannot comprehend—is to those who live by faith a family, a household, an eternal home, on the very threshold of which our feet now stand. There is a resurrection pledged to us all, and with that resurrection the perfect personal identity which we bear in this life. We shall be the same men, having the same minds, hearts, wills,—only with this change, that whereas here we are imperfect, there we shall be in perfection; whereas here, if the image of God be impressed upon us—as indeed it is—it is dim and faint, there we shall be as He has promised: ‘The just shall shine as the sun, in the kingdom of their Father.’⁷ But we shall be the same men still. The very same that have suffered, sorrowed, struggled, laboured,

⁷ St. Matt. xiii. 43.

hungered, and thirsted in this life, the same we shall be in the kingdom of the resurrection. And therefore there shall be a perfect and universal recognition one of another, and of all those bonds whereby we are united here. Jesus and Mary, the Mother and the Son, will be Mother and Son to all eternity: maternal and filial love will be glorified in the kingdom of heaven. Mary and Lazarus will be likewise brother and sister; Andrew and Peter, and James and John, in like manner will be bound together in eternal kindred: fraternal love and friendship shall then be glorified. So shall it be with all of you in the kingdom of God, in perfect personal identity, and perfect mutual recognition in that eternal home, in the everlasting bliss of our Father's house.

Such, then, is the personal sovereignty of Jesus Christ, manifested in Himself, and in His victory over death and the grave; and this sovereignty of life and immortality pervades His whole mystical Body now, and quickens every member of it. This is the meaning of St. John's words: 'Grace be unto you and peace from Him, who is, and who was, and who is to come; and from the seven spirits which are before His

throne: and from Jesus Christ, who is the Faithful Witness, the First Begotten of the dead and the Prince of the kings of the earth; who hath loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us a kingdom, and priests to God and His Father: to Him be glory and empire for ever and ever. Amen.⁸ The Church on earth is the kingdom of the resurrection, and the sovereignty of its Divine Head is exercised through it, as the instrument of His power and the manifestation of His government over the nations. This power He delegated in chief to His Vicar upon earth: the witness of the Divine Head of the mystical Body.

We have already traced this sovereignty over the intellect and the will of man. We have traced it also over the civil society of the world, through that which is both the type and bond of all societies—His Church. For this end, He has provided His Church with a supreme authority residing in its visible head, and with supernatural endowments, derived from Himself. On these two points it may be well a little longer to delay; but at this time we can only touch on the former. The

⁸ Apoc. i. 4-6.

presence of a supreme authority, delegated by Jesus Christ to His Vicar, has been ever acknowledged by the world by a twofold recognition. It recognises it both by submission and by antagonism.

And here I would fain make an end, but for other thoughts which are forced upon me. Yesterday I read a notable example of this homage of antagonism—a scornful, petulant attack upon those devoted sons of the Catholic Church in England, who during this Holy Week have knelt at the feet of the Vicar of Jesus Christ, testifying, in the name of us all, our fidelity and love to him and to the Master whom he represents. The writer of the article stated he did not wonder—and perhaps those who receive the teaching of such a writer may, like him, not wonder—if in the heart of some devout Catholics there may rise a doubt whether the temporal power of the Pope will ever again be restored, and if not restored, whether the spiritual power of the Pope will long survive. In the name of the Catholics of England, in whose name I have a right to speak, and in the name of Ireland, for whom I have no right but that Ireland gives

it me, and will not refuse my words, I protest against the folly and falsehood of this senseless insinuation. There is no living Catholic in Great Britain or Ireland who for one moment doubts that the power in worldly things, with which our Divine Master has invested His Vicar on earth, will continue undiminished until the hour in which it shall have fulfilled its mission; and then, in the wreck of kingdoms and the desolation of the world, it will be rendered back to Him who gave it.

In the name, then, of every Catholic here and everywhere, I bear witness that he who thinks any Catholic child to imagine that the temporal power over temporal things is the basis or strength of the spiritual prerogatives of the Vicar of Jesus Christ, or that those things are other than dust under his feet, that man, if he be not senseless, must be malicious. It is either the incapacity of the mind to understand, or the insincerity of the will that refuses to understand.

It may seem as if I have introduced a note of discord, and struck, upon this day, a sound out of harmony with the joy of the Resurrection. Not so; for He who, when He had risen from the

dead, declared: 'I am alive, and was dead; and behold, I am living for ever and ever, and have the keys of death and of hell,'⁹ is the same Who said: 'Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build My Church, and the gates of hell'—the keys of which I hold—'shall not prevail against it.' It is the power of the resurrection of Jesus Christ which quickens the Church of God. As the Head is Divine, and as the Head is the 'Resurrection and the Life,' so is the Body imperishable, and its authority indefectible and infallible. The universality, sanctity, structure, and unity of that one Body of Christ is indissoluble and imperishable. It cannot die; and that because its Head is the 'Resurrection and the Life.' Not only so, but it can never be bound. Jesus was bound with grave-clothes and laid in the grave, the stone upon the mouth of it was sealed, and guards set to watch it. The world would have hindered Him from rising.

Turn now to the history of the Church. When has king, or prince, or people, or revolution, ever prevailed to bind the Church of the living God? At this hour, the Church, living and giving

⁹ Apoc. i. 18.

life, is more widely spread, more rooted in the hearts of mankind, more fruitful beyond all example in its spiritual mission and power. Its Episcopate reaches beyond all bounds and limits of its former extent: its authority is universally obeyed by the loving hearts of its pastors and people: greater unity with its Head has never yet been seen in the history of Christendom. Princes and legislatures, penal laws, laws of prohibition, imperial despotisms, royal corruption, sanguinary revolutions, have done their worst to bind the liberty of the Church of God; but the bonds have been broken, as the threads and the withes were broken by the hands of the 'Deliverer of Israel.' So it has been, and so it shall be. Let no man believe, then, that if the temporal rights of the Church be for a moment wrested from it, the Vicar of Christ will not go onward without wallet or staff, scrip or shoes, if need be. His work will be done: for it is God's work, and none can hinder it.

But there is another lesson these censors bring to mind, and for your sakes I must speak of it. In the same senseless and clamorous article I read, for the thousandth time, that 'The government of

the Pope must go, because it is opposed to progress and modern civilisation.'

For the present, it is enough to say that 'progress' and 'modern civilisation' mean this: the world going its own way without God and without Christ; banishing Christianity from legislation; excluding religion from the education of children; dissolving the bonds of marriage; tampering with the tables of sanctity and purity, whereby the marriage state has been protected; proclaiming that the public life of nations has no religion. This is 'progress,' this is 'modern civilisation,' I acknowledge. Nations may grow cultivated and rich, scientific and prosperous; they may devote all their energies to this world; but they cannot serve God and mammon; and for that reason they serve mammon mightily, and they serve God never. Verily they have their reward: they prosper in this life, and that prosperity is all the recompense before them. Such, indeed, is 'modern civilisation' and 'progress.' And then they invite the Vicar of Jesus Christ, the representative of the Good Shepherd, the witness of truth upon earth, the teacher of the doctrines of Redemption, the expositor of the law of God, the

guardian of the Seven Sacraments, the supreme judge of the law of domestic life, the chief father and pastor of the little ones of the flock—they invite him to conform himself to ‘progress’ and ‘modern civilisation,’ under the pain of losing his temporal power. Be it destroyed seventy times seven, before a compromise of truth be made! No Pontiff who has ever reigned in the chair of Peter, no head of the Catholic Church who represents the Incarnate Son of God, ever did, or can, or ever will compromise, for all the world contains, jot or tittle of the faith or law of Christ.

Here I would fain conclude; but I must press this ‘progress’ and ‘modern civilisation’ a little farther. Let me trace it to its fountain; and that I may not detain you too long, I will only go a century back to show what it has produced. In the last century, a new code of legislation was promulgated to the civilised and Christian world, called ‘The Principles of 1789.’ Those principles were laid down as the basis of the civil order of France: and not only so; they were intended to make France the apostle of civilisation and progress throughout the Christian world. The

example of perfection, and the capital of the modern world in its civilisation and progress, was to be Paris. I need hardly say more. In eighty-two years there have been five revolutions in that city, all of them with bloodshed. No doubt you have all read of the blood which flowed during the First Revolution, as the first libation to those principles. I am old enough to remember the bloodshed in Paris in the years 1830, 1848, and 1852. And how do you think Palm Sunday was kept this year in the centre of 'modern civilisation'? By the inauguration of a civil war. How has this Holy Week been sanctified? By daily battles of brother against brother. And Good Friday? By a fiercer encounter, by the seizure of the Archbishop and pastors of the flock, by the closing of the churches, by the spoiling of sanctuaries, by the prohibition of religion. The last tidings we heard were, that it was expected a decisive assault would be made last night, that is, on Easter-eve. Verily, this is the Easter of progress! To-day is Easter-day; and who knows but that, the moment I speak, blood may not be running in the paths of that city? If this be 'progress,' and if this be 'modern civilisation,' may God in His in-

finite mercy keep it for ever from the shores of this country!

The first great French Revolution was the inauguration of the reign of Antichrist, of the denial of Christian faith, of the ruin of the Christian order, of the subversion of the authority of the Church of God, both in public and private life; and from that day to this, the principles of turbulence and apostasy have scourged and tormented kingdoms. At that time they all but entered England; at this time they may strive to enter again. Be firm, and fear not the clamorous talk of those who write to pander to the public opinion of the day. We know that He in whom we believe is the 'Resurrection and the Life,' the Head of His Church on earth, the sovereignty of which shall never fail. Whether the Church be clothed with temporal power or not, so long as the world is Christian, the world will believe in Jesus Christ and in His Vicar. So long as it believes He has a Vicar upon earth, no king, prince, or sovereign whatsoever will venture to claim him as a subject. Even at this moment, the unjust and sacrilegious revolution of Italy has not dared to call him subject, but, with pretences

and guarantees, which are mere illusion, has attempted to throw dust in the eyes of the Christian world, and deceive those who cannot be deceived. So long as the world is Christian, the Chief Pastor of the Christian world will remain as he is—subject to no human authority. This is his temporal power. It is not the possession of a bit of land or of a city; it is independence of all power on earth; being the delegation of Him who said: ‘All power on earth is given to Me; go ye, therefore, and teach all nations.’

There may, indeed, be another alternative; and I acknowledge, looking to the stream of events, the time may come when the nations, governments, and legislatures may cease to believe that Jesus Christ has a Church upon earth; and in the day when they cease so to believe (and I am bound to say, their acts lead us to think they are not far off from that state of unbelief), then the world will not be Christian, and then I acknowledge that the Vicar of Jesus Christ will have no temporal power over the world that has rejected his Master. Though I am no prophet, and no expositor of prophecy, and know nothing of what is to come, save only as the

Catholic Church and faith guide me, of this I am sure, from the lips of Jesus Christ; that in those days which we call the latter times, 'kingdom shall rise against kingdom, and nation against nation, and brother betray brother to death;' and the world shall be in misery it never knew before. When these things shall come to pass, the tyranny of the world will be well-nigh over, and the despotism of men will no more sway the Church of God; revolutions will not long prosper, because there is One at the door who must reign until He puts all enemies under His feet; and when that time shall come, will come also the 'resurrection of the just.'

LECTURE V.

THE SOVEREIGNTY OF THE CHURCH DERIVED FROM
ITS DIVINE HEAD.

‘Because thou hast seen Me, Thomas, thou hast believed : blessed are they that have not seen, and have believed.’ St. John xx. 29.

ON the night of the first day of the week, when our Lord rose from the dead, He came, the doors being shut, and appeared suddenly in the midst of His disciples. Thomas was not with them; either through fear, or from doubt, or from human infirmity, he had parted from the Apostles. He lost, therefore, the manifestation of our Divine Master, when He came to assure His Apostles of His resurrection from the dead. He lost, also, the communication of the royalties of the kingdom of God, which Jesus conveyed to His disciples in the words: ‘As My Father hath sent Me, even so send I you.’

He lost his share in the power of the keys, and the gift of the Holy Ghost, which was conferred when our Lord breathed upon His Apostles, and said: 'Receive ye the Holy Ghost;' and 'whose-soever sins ye shall retain, they are retained.'¹ Such was the loss incurred by Thomas through his transient unbelief.

He also exposed himself to two great dangers: to the blindness of incredulity, and to the sin of obstinacy. For, when the disciples told him: 'We have seen the Lord,' he answered: 'Unless I put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hands into His side, I will not believe.' He had the presumption to prescribe the kind and degree of evidence upon which alone he would believe. Nevertheless, such is the tenderness and condescension of our Divine Lord, that, on the first day of the following week, and again at night, when the Apostles were gathered together, and Thomas with them, He came once more. The air seemed to give up His bodily presence. At once, by Divine intuition, and before a word was spoken, fixing His eyes on Thomas, He said: 'Put forth thou thy finger: put it into the print

¹ St. John xx. 22, 23.

of the nails, and thrust thy hand into My side; and be not incredulous, but faithful.' And Thomas answered: 'My Lord and my God.' And Jesus answered him: 'Because thou hast seen Me, Thomas, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and have believed;'—a benediction shall be on thee; but a greater benediction shall be on them who, with docility and generosity of faith, shall hereafter, without seeing, believe in Me.

This benediction has descended upon us, and upon all who to the end shall believe in the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. I have already spoken of the mystery and of the effects of the resurrection of our Divine Saviour, of the re-assumption of His deified humanity, which is the pledge and productive principle—that is, the cause—of our rising again to immortality of life. Thus far I have spoken of the rising of His natural body, which is now at the right hand of God, in the proper stature and dimensions of His person. I will now take up again another part of the subject, on which I then touched only in passing—I mean, the power of the resurrection of Jesus Christ now, in this world, and in this mortal state,

in His mystical Body, which is the Church. My object will be to show that the powers of the resurrection, 'The powers of the world to come,' as St. Paul writes to the Hebrews,² are at this moment present and in action in the mystical Body of Christ, that is, in the visible Church on earth.

Saint Augustine, answering the cavils and pretensions of the Donatists in Africa, who, separating themselves from the unity of the Universal Church, claimed to be the Catholic Church, argued as follows: 'The Body of Christ is spread throughout all nations: you are shut up and confined in Africa. The true Body of Christ is universal; we see the Body, and we believe in the Head. The Body and the Head are one, united in one mystical Person. The Apostles saw the Head; but they did not see the Body, which was afterwards to be revealed. Seeing the Head, they believed in the future, that is, in the universality of the Body, which should one day be spread throughout the world. They then saw the Divine Head, they believed in the universality of the Church which should be. We now see the universality of the Church, and believe in the Divine Head enthroned in heaven.'

² Hebrews vi. 5.

As the Head and the Body make up one mystical Person, so the prerogatives and sovereignty of that Head are communicated to the Body. As in the one person of Jesus Christ the prerogatives and perfections of the Godhead were attributed to Him as man, and as the sufferings and the passion of the manhood were attributed also to Him as God, by reason of the unity of the Person, so it may be said of the Head and the Body of the Church.

1. Our Divine Lord declared that He is the Resurrection; and because He is the Resurrection, His Body upon earth has in it the principle of immortality. Though temporal death, that is, the separation of body and soul, must pass upon all the members of the Church, there is in the mystical Body of Christ the principle of the resurrection and of immortality. The sentence of death includes not only the separation of the soul from the body, but also the eternal separation of the body and the soul from God. But this can never take place in the Body of Christ. All the individual members of the mystical Body of Christ upon earth will pay the penalty of temporal death; they will die, and be buried in the earth.

Multitudes of these members will die also spiritually, and will never see eternal life, because they will have been separated from God in this world by apostasy or by mortal sin. They who have been in the unity of the Church, but have apostatised from it, are cut off from God; they who, whether they be in the Church or not, commit mortal sin, are thereby separated from God, and, if they so die, will be separated eternally. Nevertheless, there always has been, and always will be, in the one Church of God, which is the Body of Christ, a line, a chain, a fellowship of those who believe and are united vitally and by the Holy Ghost to their Divine Head in heaven. In them, therefore, life and immortality and the pledge of the resurrection always abide. This is what is called the indefectibility of the Church, or, in the words of the promise of our Divine Lord, ‘The gates of hell shall not prevail against it;’ it shall never succumb to the powers of sin and death. As the Apostle Paul writes: ‘There is now no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus, who walk not according to the flesh. For the law of the Spirit of life, in Christ Jesus, hath delivered me from the law of sin and

of death.’³ Therefore the Church of God is indefectible. It partakes of the property of its Head; it has an imperishable life, and the pledge of immortality.

2. Secondly, because the Head of the Church is Holy, the Body is holy. Now, the Head of the Church is the Son of God, and therefore He has the uncreated sanctity of God. In His Incarnation He was anointed with the Holy Ghost, that is, with the fulness of sanctifying grace; and He is the Head or Fountain from whom sanctity descends upon all His members. As the unction on the head of the high-priest descended to the hem of his garment, so does the sanctity of the Son of God descend through all the members of His Body; that is to say, we are made the members of His Body by regeneration, through the Sacrament of Baptism, by water and the Holy Ghost; we are sanctified in living union with Him by the holy Sacraments and the indwelling of the Spirit of Grace.

There is, then, a sanctity pervading the whole Church; and yet how much of sin attaches to it; how many sinners are within its unity. Our Lord

³ Rom. viii. 1, 2.

has told us to expect both good fish and bad in the one net, and both tares and wheat in the one field. Such is the mixture of good and evil in the visible Church. Some are scandalised at it, not knowing the Scriptures, nor believing the Word of God. They think to form to themselves a Church which shall be pure before the last day, and now in this mortal state cleansed from every stain; a thing contrary to the word of prophecy and the parables of our Divine Lord. The mixture of good and evil is permitted in the turbulent sea of this world; but they shall be separated on the eternal shore. And yet though there be an evil mixture in the visible Church of Christ—bad Christians, bad Catholics, men whose lives are a scandal and a shame—nevertheless, the sanctity of the Church is never tainted.

The Body of Christ is the dwelling-place of the Holy Ghost, the Sanctifier. It is the Body of a Divine Head; and in that Body are the Sacraments, or channels of sanctity, immutable and undefiled. In that Body are the works of the Holy Ghost, the fruits of sanctity; and they are, first, innocent souls who have preserved their baptismal grace, and have grown up from the waters of bap-

tism as the willows by the watercourses, straight and vigorous; or penitent souls, once broken like the bruised reed, raised up again by penance, and restored to the life of God. These are the twofold operations of the Holy Ghost, working through the Church. St. John is the type of the one, St. Mary Magdalen of the other; and this supernatural grace is verified throughout all ages in the unity of the Church; and the sanctity of the Church manifests itself perpetually in the innocent and the penitent, who are the fruits of sanctity.

3. And further: when Pilate asked of our Divine Lord, 'What is truth?' He answered not a word; but when He taught His disciples, He said, 'I am the Truth;' that is, 'The Truth—it is I.' For God is Truth, and Jesus is God. The truth is revealed in Jesus Christ; and to know Him, His mind, and His will, is to know the truth of God. The revelation of Christianity is the knowledge of God in Jesus Christ. To know the mind of Jesus Christ is to know the doctrines of the faith. To know the will of Jesus Christ is to know His laws and His Church. Dogma is the clear, definite, mental perception, and the precise, logical, scien-

tific expression in words, of those eternal, immutable, and Divine truths which are revealed to us. For people to say, 'I believe in truth, but I do not believe in dogma,' is like saying, 'I believe in substances, but only when they cast no shadows.' Every substance casts its shadow, and every truth leaves its definite impression upon the reason of man; and the enunciation of that definite impression is dogma.

If the men of the nineteenth century would be a little more consecutive—or, if that is asking too much, a little more patient—they would not be scared by the word 'dogma.' The Church of Jesus Christ possesses the truth; it possesses His mind, it knows it always, it enunciates it clearly, and can never err in its enunciation. It is in possession of His revelation; and it applies that revelation, as the test of truth, to the opinions, the teachings, and the errors of men. As the leprosy disappeared from the body of Naaman, and as the scales fell from the eyes of the blind, so, when the truth of the revelation is brought in contact with error, straightway error is detected, and is healed.

In the Church no error has ever established

itself. In these eighteen hundred years, during which the restless activity of the human intellect has been perpetually devising for itself new modes of conception and of expression—thereby perpetually either going beyond the truth or falling short of it, thus producing heresies—never yet in the Catholic Church has a heresy been able to establish itself or to effect a lodgment. Always and invariably has it been expelled. As a morbid humour of the body is expelled by the vigour of life, so everything contrary to the perfect life of the body and the perfect purity of truth has been sooner or later cast out—so completely eliminated, that not a taint remains behind. The Church is in all ages what it was in the beginning—the witness, judge, and teacher of the whole revelation of God.

It bears witness to the truth it has received. It is the judge, applying that revelation as a test to the teachings of men, condemning the errors, and accepting what is true. It is the teacher, not as scribes and Pharisees, by quotations and criticisms and contradictions among themselves, but by the voice of authority—as one having power. As it is written of our Divine Master, ‘the people

heard Him gladly;' and for this reason, that 'He taught as one having power—that is, authority—and not as the scribes.' And what is this but that which men rail at, the infallibility of the Church? That is, the Church does not err. Individuals may err, as individuals may die; but the Church can not err, as the Church cannot die. Why does not the Church err? Because it is the Body of a Divine Head; and that Divine Head is Truth. It is the dwelling-place of the Spirit of Truth, who, inhabiting the Body, always sustains it in the knowledge and enunciation of truth.

4. Again—for I do not purpose to enter into this argument in detail; I am merely touching on points of it for a purpose that will hereafter appear—there is another property of our Divine Lord, which is also communicated to His Body. Christ is One. The Godhead and the manhood are united in the Unity of the One Person of the Eternal Son, and the Godhead and the manhood are indissolubly united for all eternity. Christ cannot be divided; and as the Head is indivisible, so is the Body; and the Unity of the Body excludes the possibility of division. Fragmentary portions may be broken off from

it, as fragments and boulders may roll from a mountain side, but the mountain remains immovable and indivisible in its perfect identity. So is it with the Universal Church. Its unity both within and without cannot be dissolved.

Of the external unity of the Church, some people speak as if they thought it were a constitution, or the result of legislation. The outward and visible unity of the Church is the result of its inward unity, which is invisible; and no external unity could exist—or, if it, for a time, could be put together, would endure—unless it spring from an internal unity, which in itself is imperishable. For what is the cause of the visible and outward unity of the Catholic Church? The unity of faith, the unity of doctrine, the unity of intellect, the fusion, I may say, of the lights of the supernatural illumination, as the sun's rays all mingle together in the splendour of the noon-day light. So all the intelligences of the Church, throughout its whole expanse, and throughout all its eighteen hundred years of duration, are all united and concentrated in the belief of one truth and of one faith, which comes from a Divine voice. And because the intellects of men are

thus indissolubly one, therefore their hearts are one: having one truth, they have one charity; and their hearts being one, they have one will; and therefore in the unity of the Church of God, there is an internal unity so vital and creative, that it impresses itself upon its external structure. Thus the visible unity is the outward expression of that internal unity from which it springs. But from what source is this unity derived? It comes from the Person of its Head. He is the one and only source of all truth; the one and only source of all jurisdiction and of all authority; and that jurisdiction and authority spreads itself throughout the whole circle of His Universal Church, from the sunrise to the sunset. It follows therefore as a direct consequence, that as Christ is not divided, so neither is His Church divided. There can be divisions from it, but divisions in the Church of Christ or in any part of it are impossible. He Himself has said: 'Every kingdom divided against itself shall be made desolate: and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand;'⁴ and this affirms that its unity is indivisible; as St. Bede says, with

⁴ St. Matt. xii. 25.

a terse simplicity: 'The kingdom of God is not divided, because the kingdom of God can never fall.'

5. There is one more point, to which all I have said directly leads. Our Lord has delegated to His Church a share of His sovereignty; and the supernatural properties which He has communicated to His Body constitute that sovereignty. He said to His Apostles: 'You who have followed Me, in the regeneration, when the Son of Man shall sit on the seat of His majesty, you also shall sit on twelve seats, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.'⁵

This does not mean only in the heavenly state hereafter. The regeneration is now in the world; working always from the time our Lord said: 'Go, and baptise all nations.' Then was begun the regeneration of mankind. The Son of God now sits on the throne of His glory, and the Apostles sit upon their thrones on earth. Peter still sits upon the chief throne of the Universal Church. This prophecy and promise are being fulfilled now upon earth, in the midst of us. We are a part of its fulfilment; for the twelve tribes of Israel are the mystical tribes of the faithful

⁵ St. Matt. xix. 28.

throughout the whole world, the true seed promised to Abraham.

Again, our Lord said: 'I appoint to you, as My Father hath appointed to Me, a kingdom;'⁶ and in the Apocalypse: 'The kingdom of this world is become our Lord's and His Christ's.'⁷ That is to say, there is a delegated sovereignty upon earth, derived from the Son of God, representing His person, and invested with His prerogatives of immortality, sanctity, infallibility, unity, and, therefore, of Divine authority. Sovereignty is the supremacy of these supernatural endowments over the whole natural course and order of this world. And the throne of this sovereignty is the Church, by which Christ reigns among men.

The sovereignty, then, of our Lord Jesus Christ, sitting at the right hand of God, to whom 'all power in heaven and on earth' is given, consists not only in His sovereignty over individual souls. He has, as we have seen, a sovereignty over the intellect by faith, and over the heart by love, and over the will by obedience; but His is a sovereignty which extends itself to families and to

⁶ St. Luke xxii. 29.

⁷ Apoc. xi. 15.

households: it guides the authority of parents, it directs the obedience of children, it inspires the charity of brethren. Christian households have our Divine Lord as their head; and not only households, but peoples: for what are they but the aggregate of families? they make states, they therefore constitute governments. Governments make laws, and rulers execute laws. But who is the Head and Fountain of their power? From whom is derived the authority and direction for the civil government over mankind? From Him who is the Lord and Redeemer of men, who is also the Head even of the natural order, or, as we call it, of political society. He is the supreme ruler and chief; and by Him kings reign, and princes decree judgment.

The Son of God is the Head of all power in heaven and in earth, both of the spiritual and of the political or civil order of the world; and when the sovereignty or kingship of Jesus Christ began to work throughout the nations of the world, what were its effects? First of all, as I have said before,^s slavery was steadily extinguished. The greatest tyranny of man over man, the claim of

^s See Lect. iii. p. 76.

man to hold man as a chattel, and to have possession in the flesh and blood of a fellow-creature, this greatest debasement of man by man, was extinguished by 'the freedom wherewith Christ hath made us free.'⁹ Next: woman was raised again to her true dignity. Woman, who had been the toy, the tool, and the prey of man, was elevated and made to be, conjointly with man, the head over the families and households of Christendom. Thirdly, wars, which before had been sanguinary and brutal beyond all that imagination can conceive, were restrained by laws of mercy and by arbitrations of justice. Once more,—the criminal code, whereby the life of man was taken, for the protection of society, was cruel and unrelenting, until, under the action of the sovereignty of Jesus Christ and the legislation of the Church, it was mitigated and tempered from age to age. Again, a quality, unknown before Christianity came on earth, save only in Israël, and there only in part—unknown altogether in the heathen world—was infused into the hearts of men; that is, charity—a tenderness, and a human sympathy of man for man. It

⁹ Gal. iv. 31.

is a fact, too well known to dwell upon, that in the heathen world not a hospital was to be found. Even in its most advanced civilisation, before Christianity, the sick died without mercy. Another effect of Christianity in the civil order of the world is mutual respect,—the respect of inferiors for the superior, of the subject for authority, the respect of authority for the subject, of the higher for the lower, of equal for equal, and of all men for those around and even below them; because all alike bear the image of Jesus Christ; because all alike were redeemed in the Blood of the same Saviour; because all alike were the temples of the Holy Ghost; because they all alike received the same Precious Body and Blood of Jesus Christ at the Altar. The poor servant that did the bidding of a Christian master, it may be that morning had been to the Altar, and had been made a tabernacle of the Son of God. And this participation by all alike of the same Precious Body and Blood of Jesus Christ infused throughout society a mutual respect, which is the foundation of all justice and equity, charity and mercy. And from all these sprang up the commonwealth of Christian men, not only of individuals and of households, but of

nations, states, and empires, which we call Christendom. From this Divine root was produced the civilisation and progress of mankind; which to be such must be Christian, and can be accomplished only by the Son of God, and by His sovereignty alone. I can but touch, and that briefly, on this subject, of which I spoke before, and broke off then as I needs must now. I can do no more than sketch the mere outline of certain great truths, which nevertheless will, I hope, be of use in putting you on your guard against the silver sounds which are chimed and chanted in our ears every morning about civilisation, progress, advancement, dignity, and I know not what; as if the ‘Golden Age’ were before us, into which we are all advancing, while — as I will show hereafter — the world is rejecting the sovereignty of Jesus Christ.

My purpose, then, in pointing out that the Church on earth partakes of the properties and prerogatives of its Divine Head, and, therefore, of His sovereignty, is to draw two plain conclusions.

The first is this: That civilisation can be perfect only when it is Christian; that civilisation, or the culture and ripening of the civil and political

society of man, is never perfect, and can never be perfect, unless elevated by union with the laws of Christianity under the sovereignty of the Son of God.

The civil and domestic society of man in the order of nature existed before Christianity came on earth. This also is God's work, and in this order there may be a natural civilisation. Let anybody, who desires to know what was the civilisation of man before Christianity, read any work on the literature and the morals of Rome and Athens. And if you desire the name or title of a book on this subject, I will say read a book on *The Formation of Christendom*, lately published among us; or, if you wish something more detailed and extensive, read a work called *The Gentile and the Jew*, by a well-known professor of history in Germany. A rankness of corruption, intellectual and moral, is depicted in the pages of the latter book, which no Christian heart could conceive. Such was civilisation without Christianity.

When the supernatural society of the Church descended upon the natural society of the world, the order of nature was elevated by regeneration,

by baptism, by grace, by faith, by light, and by guidance. Then there was a union between those two societies, natural and supernatural; or, as men commonly say, 'Church and State.' That is to say, they mutually recognised each other as creations of God in different spheres, mutually recognised each other's office, mutually respected each other's functions, and, being united together, they co-operated for the welfare of man under one and the same Head, one and the same Sovereign. When the civil order of the world acknowledged Jesus Christ as its true Head and Sovereign, then civilisation was Christian, and then there was progress. Progress signifies an advance in the order of perfection, both internal in states, and external with their neighbours. This includes intellectual cultivation, knowledge, both scientific and spiritual; justice—that is, just laws, and just administration of laws; and lastly, the arts and the fruits of peace in industries of every kind of human skill and toil. This progress, I assert, was steadily advancing, so long as the world was Christian. This is our first conclusion.

And the second is self-evident: That what is called modern civilisation, is civilisation without

Christianity. I believe, indeed, that the men, or at least many of them, who use these words do not know what they imply, and would reject it if they saw it. But civilisation without the sovereignty of Jesus Christ, is the rejection of the Christian order under which the progress of the world has hitherto steadily advanced.

In order to make this as clear as I can, and in as few words, let me remind you that there are three causes which have broken up the Christian civilisation of Europe and of the world.

In the fifteenth century, the study and cultivation of classical literature excited in the minds of the leading men of European countries a sort of admiration, which I may call a worship, of the models of pagan antiquity, of its philosophy and its policy, of its patriots, and of its public morality. That which is styled the *Renaissance*, or the New Birth of the Christian world, profoundly infected the men of that day. This antichristian reaction has spread down to the present time. People were deceived into thinking that the *Renaissance* was the measure of all that is cultivated and civilised. This was the first step, as I will show, to the rejection of Christian civilisation.

It introduced paganism into books, into language, into art, into education. On the testimony of multitudes of men, in which I bear my own part, the education of Christian nations has been based and formed upon what is called classical literature. The examples, maxims, principles, the deeds, the crimes, personal, private, and public, even to the assassination of princes and revolt of peoples, glorified in classical literature, have been taken in unconsciously by boys in their early education for these three hundred years. In Italy and France this is already bearing its fruit.

Next came a period, of which I have no wish to speak controversially, but I must speak clearly. It called itself the Reformation. This will be found to be a second step towards the rejection of Christian civilisation.

The first work of this Reformation was to shatter the unity of faith: to render impossible the unity of worship, to excite individuals to withdraw their obedience from the one Church of Jesus Christ, to tempt families and households withdraw their obedience from the truth; then states, peoples, and governments. Finally, governments set up, in the place of the one and

undivided religion, I know not how many forms of Christianity established by law. Into this I will not farther enter. The work of disintegration was begun; the unity of faith and worship among the nations was shattered. Then national religions and their sub-divisions rendered unity impossible. So far as the Reformation extended itself, it carried religious conflict throughout the Christian society of men.

Thirdly. I have already spoken of what are called the principles of 1789. I will not say more of them now, than to add that they are the legitimate application of the principles of the Reformation to States. They are Lutheranism in politics, and they have done for the civil order that which the Reformation did for the ecclesiastical. The Reformation broke up the religious unity, and the principles of 1789 broke up the political unity, of Christian Europe. From that day a perpetual dissolution, crumbling, and decay in the foundations of society has undermined every country where these principles have taken root.

One main cause of it is this, that those principles were not a development or a progressive

expansion of the existing traditional institutions of Europe. They began with destruction, by cutting through the roots, by pulling down the tree. It was a work of ruin, and in place of Christian civilisation were substituted principles that were directly subversive of it.

Two plain conclusions follow from what has just been said.

First. That the *differentia* of modern civilisation is the exclusion from the political order of religious unity in faith, worship, and education; the separation of Church from State, and State from Church. It is the separation of the civil and political order of the world from Christianity, and from the sovereignty of its Divine Head.

The second conclusion is this; that what is called progress, in this kind of civilisation, is not progress, but regress; it is not going onward, but backward. As the *Renaissance* of which I spoke was a return to the political state of the world before Christ, and because *before* Christ, necessarily *without* Christ, so the civilisation which springs from it is a civilisation which goes its own way without regard to the faith or the laws of Jesus Christ: that is to say, it is a return into the state of the world

before Christ. I deny to this the name of Progress. It is a going backward, not onward. It is a relapse into the civilisation of Paganism.

Let us take an example of the day. We are hearing all day long of that which is called the Religious Difficulty: the poor children of our streets cannot be educated together—and why? Because of the religious difficulty. And legislators meet, night after night, to debate the religious difficulty, and know not what to do for the education of the poor, because of the religious difficulty. What is the religious difficulty? Where was the religious difficulty before the unity of the Faith was shattered? What has caused the religious difficulty? The shattering of the Faith, and the shattering of the Unity of the Church. But who did these things? and what has reduced us to secular education without Christianity? The religious difficulty, and they who made it. Tell me, is this progress? I should as soon call the turning off from the straight sea-line homeward, into an ocean full of rocks and shoals, a homeward voyage. It is not progress, it is regress; it is error, deviation, wandering: and the further and faster men go in this direction, the further and

faster they are leaving the sovereignty of Jesus Christ.

We are told what great things modern civilisation has done. It has abolished penal laws. But who made them? I thank no man for abolishing penal laws against the Catholic Faith. I accuse those who enacted them, and set up the tyranny and persecution under which the Faith has suffered. I accuse the forefathers of those, who, happily for themselves, by the working of a higher and nobler spirit, have undone the deeds of their forefathers. I am not grateful, except for the kindly feeling of those who may be moved in sympathy to do it. But I recognise nothing noble in this. I recognise nothing in the man who has done me a wrong, and then retracts the wrong, but that he has at last done that which was right. To be just is simple duty. To thank men for doing a duty implies a doubt of their integrity.

I am told also, I know not what, of the advantages of progress, of electric telegraphs, railways, and the prohibition of intramural burial. Do men desire to make so grave a subject as this to be contemptible?

This, then, is the truth : The world under the constant action of Christianity and the sovereignty of Divine law was advancing in civilisation and making true progress, until a blight fell upon it. The disorders and anarchies of three hundred years ago came to check and to overthrow the course of its advance. Christianity would have abolished all social evils with greater speed and certainty, if its onward course had not been stayed. As for the abolition of old tyrannies, it was this very departure from Christianity which caused them. There never could have been State Churches to be disestablished, if dominant heresies and schisms had not first established them.

We have not yet seen to what modern civilisation is on its way. It is making progress, it is true ; but what will it progress to ? To the utter and entire rejection of Christianity ; to the abolition of the 'religious difficulty' from legislation, from education, and from domestic life ; to the relegating and banishing of religion from all public life to the individual conscience and private life of man. Civilisation before Christianity was bad enough : but civilisation which is apostate from Christianity, is worse than all. Before it became

Christian, civilisation persecuted Christianity with the blind brute force of the heathen; but apostate civilisation will know how to persecute with refined and cunning procedure, which nothing but a knowledge of Christianity could have given.

Look into the words and deeds—I will not say of the first French Revolution—that hideous masquerade of Feasts of the Supreme Being and worship of reason, with the abominable personifications of that worship—I will not go so far back: what did we read yesterday? A man at the head of the movement in Paris—and yet a moderate—who has separated himself from the leaders of the extreme Revolution, wrote such words as these: ‘Why should not the churches be robbed? Why should not the treasures of Notre Dame be taken? How were they obtained? By teaching people to believe in heaven and hell. It is money obtained under false pretences; there is no heaven and no hell; Frenchmen have ceased to believe in them.’ That is not yet the last word of civilisation without Christianity; but to that, and more, it has already come.

There is as yet a time of stillness and indifference. Liberalism is a twilight state in which all

errors are softened: in which no persecution for religion will be countenanced. It is the stillness before the storm. There is a time coming when nothing will be persecuted but truth: and if you possess the truth, you will share it.

We were told yesterday, again: ‘As for the temporal power of the Pope’—that is, as we have seen, the public recognition of the sovereignty of Jesus Christ over both orders, civil and spiritual, the union of pontiff and king in one person, as pontiff and king are united in the Divine Head whom he represents—we were told, ‘This strange anomaly has gone down in the tide of advancing civilisation and progress.’ There is, indeed, a tide rising on every side; and a wiser than the writer of those words has said: ‘As in the days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, and marrying and giving in marriage, and they knew not till the flood came and took them all away.’ So assuredly this rising tide of civilisation and progress will carry away the blind apostles who are now preaching it.

There remains in England, and I thank God to know it, much of the Christian and Catholic tradition of our civil order still unbroken. The

foundations of our civil state were laid in times before regenerations and reformations and the worship of pagan life and its examples had turned the heads of men. The foundations of our civil order date back a thousand years. Our monarchy, popular freedom, open tribunals, maxims of just judgment, and the broad base upon which the public order of England reposes, were solidly and peacefully compacted, before modern civilisation and modern progress had its name or being. There is in England a belief in Christianity as a Divine revelation, and in the written Word of God as part of it, and a recognition of the duty of public worship, and a respect for the first day of the week, sacred to our Lord's Resurrection; and above all, there is that which Englishmen love, and which even the poor and the working men last year publicly testified to be their desire—Christian education for their children. They desire that they be educated, indeed, but as Christians. The voice of the people of England has been decisively heard on this, and I bless God for it. I speak not only to you who are of my flock, but to all who hear me, though they be not of my flock—I would to God they were.

Hold fast to those Catholic traditions of our land ; they are more precious than life itself. Hold fast to them, and hand them on as the true and only inheritance of Christian civilisation, and of progress to mankind.

LECTURE VI.

THE SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD OVER THE COURSE OF THE WORLD.

And a voice came out from the throne, saying: Give praise to our God, all ye His servants; and you that fear Him, little and great. And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of great thunders, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord our God, the Almighty, hath reigned.' Apoc. xix. 5, 6.

AFTER all that the world can do, God is still upon His throne: and after all the rebellions of man, He sits above the water-floods, and abides a King for ever. The last subject which remains for us is the sovereignty of God over the course of the world.

This vision which St. John describes, is the

summing-up of the whole history of the world, and of the conflict between the sovereignty of God and the rebellious will of man. This conflict began in Paradise, and will never cease until the Son of God shall come to judge the living and the dead.

In these days, any man who quotes the statutes of an earthly kingdom is listened to; for an immediate, prompt, and inexorable power executes, at once, its sentence upon all gainsayers; but any man who quotes the laws of Holy Scripture is derided, because the Divine judgment tarries, and the sovereignty of God bides its time: because judgment is not speedily executed upon earth, the heart of man is set to do evil. But we are not ashamed to quote the words of Holy Writ; for Holy Writ is the word of God, and Heaven and earth shall pass away, but His word shall not pass away.

The history written in Holy Scripture is God's history of His own sovereignty. From first to last, it is the annals of the reign of God over the world: from the Creation, to the manifestation of His kingdom in Jesus Christ, the whole narrative of the sacred Books is the revelation

of the sovereignty of God over men and nations. It is, therefore, the history of the world written by a supernatural light; and an interpretation of the history of the world as it is read by the principalities and powers in heavenly places, to whom is made known by the Church the manifold wisdom of God. I take, therefore, the page of Holy Scripture as the witness of the sovereignty of God over the course of this world. To illustrate my subject—because I can do no more than give its outline—it is enough to remind you that, from Adam to Noe, God had His servants on earth, who did His will in the midst of those who rebelled against Him. He was sovereign over both: in grace over the faithful, in justice over the rebellious. The Flood, which purged the earth, was an act of God's judicial sovereignty upon the sins of man. From Noe to Abraham, from Abraham to Moses, from Moses to the Messias—that is, to the coming of God in our manhood—the sovereignty of God was more and more visibly displayed among men, until it was incorporated in the priesthood and the kingdom of Israel. But the theocracy of Israel was only a shadow: a type and prophecy of a more manifest revelation and of

a sovereignty yet to come. The law was the shadow, the gospel is the substance: that which was typified in the theocracy of Israel was fulfilled in the manifestation of God in Jesus Christ. The coming of our Divine Lord into the world was the foundation of His kingdom and the revelation of His sovereign power, which, by the line of His Vicars upon earth, He exercises at this day.

Let us here take up again our last subject. We have seen that God has created two societies for the sanctification of man,—the natural society, or the human and political or civil order; the supernatural society, or the order of grace, which is His Church; and that His will and predestination was, that these two societies should be united together; so that as the body and soul in man constitute one perfect humanity, so the natural and the supernatural societies should be united together in their full integrity and perfect amity under one Head, Jesus Christ, each retaining its due proportions of power, and both mutually co-operating for the welfare and sanctification of mankind. This was our last conclusion. And I then pointed out that the civilisation of mankind, to be true, must be Christian; that no civilisation is real but that which is

Christian; that civilisation, if it puts off its Christianity, returns again to the order of nature, and becomes merely human, and incurs all the penalties of its relapse; that all progress in the world, intellectual, moral, social, civil, and political, depends, as upon its chief condition, on the direction and the laws of Christianity; and that when civilisation departs from Christianity, instead of progressing, it goes backward, and falls from the order which God has instituted for its perfection. It relapses into the state of man before the Son of God came into this world, and the kingdom of God was revealed. When, therefore, we hear the Catholic Church, and above all, the head of the Catholic Church, denounced as an obstacle to civilisation and to progress, it is the whispering of that same tempting voice which, in the garden, said, 'Why hath God commanded you?' and 'For God doth know.'¹ Civilisation, as the world preaches it, is the will and the intellect claiming independence of the laws of God; and progress is, man going where he wills and doing as he lists. From the conclusion of our last subject, this follows as a corollary — that civilisation without

¹ Gen. iii. 1-5.

Christianity is degradation, and that social progress out of the line of that civilisation is a going backward.

1. There is no doubt that the Christian civilisation of the world is, in part, broken up, and, in part, threatened: and that throughout the whole of Christendom. I am met therefore, at the outset, with the objection, 'Where, then, is this sovereignty? The nations of the world are casting it off. People that were Christian are Christian now no longer. Those who were highly Catholic have rejected, if not the Catholic Church, at least the temporal power of the Vicar of Jesus Christ. You are too late in the day to talk of the sovereignty of God. In the middle ages it may have been superstitiously believed, but the illumination of these latter ages has cast it off.' To this I reply: it is most true, as a fact, that these two societies, natural and supernatural, which ought to be united for the welfare of mankind, are at this moment almost everywhere disunited. This separation began when the Oriental, or Eastern Church, severed itself from the unity of the Catholic Church, and fell under the supremacy of the Imperial power. From that time the civil power of the empire fostered, en-

couraged, and abetted the spread of schism for its own purposes. Religion, under the direction of the civil power, becomes a powerful instrument of political government. It becomes a department of the State, and a vast field for patronage. Such the separated Eastern Church became in the hands of the Byzantine Emperors. From that time it became intensely Erastian—that is to say, the supreme fountain of its jurisdiction, and the supreme guide of its legislation and of its executive power, was in the civil authority. Flowing from this came unimaginable corruptions, which exist to this day. Perhaps there is no part of Christendom which exhibits a sterility so utter, or a fixedness so rigid and death-like, as the Oriental Church separated from the Holy See.

Next, the same usurpation by the civil powers manifested itself in the north and in the west of Europe. It would be against my will to go into any detail of matters nearer home; but for clearness it must be said that, for the last three hundred years, in Germany and in these countries, the relation of the two societies, civil and spiritual, and the order which God had instituted, have been inverted. Religion has been made a part of legislation

and of government. Religion and State Churches have been, as it is called, 'established.' But this is the inversion of the whole Divine order. It is the State that needs to be established by the Church, not the Church by the State; the inferior cannot sustain the superior. It is not the order of nature that upholds the order of grace; it is the order of grace that upholds and perfects the order of nature. All human power, human authority, human legislation, human society, depends, as I have shown, for its perfection, its perpetuity, its progress, its welfare, its peace, upon the sovereignty of God, by and through His Church. The Church may hold and use temporal power, but it will not be established by it. In other countries, which profess to remain within the unity of the Catholic Church, has appeared a pernicious illusion, which has blinded and seduced many better minds. It is called the 'Free Church in the Free State.' This imagination rests on the assumption that the two societies are perfectly free and independent one of another, which is absolutely true of the Church, but absolutely false of the State; that they are two societies upon a perfect equality. This again is absolutely false, because the super-

natural or Divine order is higher than the natural and human. Lastly, it assumes that they may go each their way without reciprocal duties and mutual co-operation; which is contrary to the law of God, both in nature and in grace. We have seen that the supernatural society elevates and perfects the natural, even in the order of civilisation. The separation of these two works of God is the loss and fall of the civil and political society of the world. But in the east, the north, the west, and now in the south of Christendom, there are not only theories and principles, but actual policies and systems of legislation, the ultimate object of which is to divorce and to separate the two societies which God has created to be united together. You are aware that, in the Syllabus, the Holy See has condemned the following proposition: 'That the Church ought to be separated from the State, and the State from the Church.'²

2. Such are the historical facts. Let us now see what is the cause, what has brought about this separation of the two societies which ought to be united. In one word, it is the rejection of the sovereignty of God: first, individuals have rejected,

² Syllab. Pii. IX. Prop. 55.

one by one, the prerogative of God over the intellect and over the will; then, as they grow in number and in activity, they form a public opinion, which at last directs the course of legislation and rejects the sovereignty of God over society. And every Christian nation, England included, has reached an advanced point in this departure from God. You will ask, ‘How could this have ever come to pass? How was it that the work of God’s providence, which was rising like sap in a vigorous and living tree, should have sunk down again to the root, and that the tree, once so green and widespread, should have begun to wither?’ The truth must be told without fear. It was because in Christendom the salt had begun to lose its savour. The blood of Christian nations was tainted. Do not confound Christian nations with the Church of Jesus Christ. The Church is imperishable, immutable in its sanctity. Every heresy and schism, every pestilence, moral, intellectual, and spiritual, the Church expels from its living system, as the living and healthful action of the human body expels the morbid humours which threaten its life: but in every nation individuals may corrupt and accumulate in number, and may at last do all

manner of evil against the Church. For example; in the period before the Council of Constance, the nations of Europe were beginning, from national pride and mutual jealousy, to rise against the spiritual authority of the Church, and to separate themselves and their laws from the laws of the Church, into what by a strange irony was called ‘obediencies.’ This spirit of schismatical nationality caused what is called the great western schism: out of the great western schism came, ultimately, what is called the Reformation, or the final separation of many nations from the unity of the Catholic Church. But you may again ask, ‘What was the cause of this schismatical nationalism?’ The truth must be told, ‘The salt had lost its savour.’ Kings and princes, pastors and people, had forsaken their first charity. They were led by the spirit of the world rather than by the Spirit of God. Zeal, self-denial, mortification, devotion, fidelity, piety, generosity, compassion for the poor, love of souls, were faint and low. Christian men lived lives that were not Christian; society was corrupted: and the course of kingdoms and of legislation swerved out of the track of faith. This is not to be denied. And

what came next? Heresies and schisms. There is not a heresy, so far as I can remember, in the history of the Church, which has not begun in some bishop or priest. Some man, ordained to be a witness of truth, and a preacher of justice, has fallen from the Church which is divinely guided to teach the faithful, as Satan fell like lightning from Heaven. They who should have been as a light to guide the intellect of men became a wildfire to blast and wither the soul. And whence came these heresies? From intellectual pride; that is, from the revolt of the intellect against the sovereignty of faith, springing from a perverse will and confirming its perversion. From heresies came schisms like that which has separated England these three hundred years from the unity of the Church. Since that evil day, the spiritual life of England has withered. We are told by public authority, that one-half of the people of England never set their foot in a place of worship. Whether that calculation be true or not, I leave to those who made it to determine; but we are told, and I repeat what I have heard, that in this city of London, one-half—that is, a million and a half of men—on this very day, and at this very hour

at which I am speaking, neither have been, nor in the course of this day will be, in any place of Christian worship. May I not well say, then, the salt has lost its savour? And what is the result upon the public life and laws of England? To legislate for a people divided in religion is impossible, unless we exclude religion from legislation. Christianity must be shut out of the sphere of legislation before you can make laws applicable to those who are divided in religion. What is the effect of such legislation? Truth and error are put upon the same footing. Toleration becomes a duty, and under cover of toleration it has come to pass that the civil society of the world has ceased to distinguish truth from error. Christianity is left to the individual conscience; it is no longer a matter of public law. Again, in the education of children, religion must be excluded from the school; or, in other words, the baptised child cannot be educated in the faith of his baptism: that is to say, he must be robbed of his inheritance. And why? Because men will wrangle about religion, and therefore their poor children are to grow up without the knowledge of God and their Redeemer. Men have broken the bonds of

faith; and the penalty falls upon their children's children.

3. The civil society of the world, then, has been departing, in its legislation, in its public laws, in the education of the young, from the sovereignty of God through His Church. Now the consequences of this are twofold. First of all, as to the Church. The Church has two offices: the one is to convert and to save individuals, and the other is to sanctify and to uphold the civil order of mankind. But when the civil society of man refuses any longer to be guided and upheld by the sanctifying grace and the sovereignty of God, the Church shakes off the dust from its feet, and goes back to its apostolic work of saving men one by one. It is at this time doing that work, and will do it; and in doing it the Church becomes more free, more independent, more separate from all contacts and embarrassments of this world. It may indeed be persecuted, perhaps it may become less in numbers, because nations and races go out from it. But it becomes once more, what it was in the beginning, a society of individuals, vigorous, pure, living, and life-giving. So much for the consequences to the Church. For the Church, then,

we have no fear. But what is its consequence on the State or political society of men? I may sum it up in these three words: it is privation, degradation, and dissolution.

First, as man, when he separates himself from God, is deprived of supernatural grace, which sustains his whole moral and spiritual life; even so the civil society of a nation, when it separates from the Church, in like manner is deprived of its supernatural perfection. It no longer has the support and guidance, the light and sanctification, which the Kingdom of God bestowed upon it. Just as men are born, through the sin of Adam, into a state of privation, so the kingdom or people, which has separated itself from the Church, is thereby deprived of the truth and grace of Christianity. Generation after generation are born into that state of public privation of the light and grace of faith.

Secondly, if Christianity be the elevation of a people, to fall from it is a degradation; because, as I said in the beginning, it is a retrograde movement, a going backward from the state of Christian civilisation into the state of nature before Christianity entered into the civil life of men.

And, thirdly, it is dissolution; because the bonds of civil society are loosened. As man, who came out of the dust, when his living spirit departs, returns to dust again, so, most assuredly, every state or kingdom which rejects the sovereignty of God, in due time will dissolve and turn again into its original confusion. How this may happen, we need not seek to know; whether by revolutions, or internal disorders, or loss of coherence, or the impossibility of maintaining its social state, or by foreign aggression, by warfare, by conquest, by whatsoever means I know not; but the word of God stands plain, and sooner or later shall be fulfilled: 'The nation and the kingdom that will not serve Thee, shall perish;'³ and that, not only by a judicial sentence, but by an intrinsic law of its own being, which works out its own dissolution.

And if such be the effect of this revolt upon the civil society of the world, what is its effect upon men one by one? When families and households have lost their domestic Christianity, which illuminated and sanctified parents and children, brothers and sisters, the result can be easily foreseen. If, as

³ *Isaias* lx. 12.

has been said before, submission to the sovereignty of God by faith be the perfection and the dignity of the intellect, then, most assuredly, the loss of that submission is its abasement. If submission of the will to the sovereignty of God, to the laws of faith and of charity, be the perfection of the human heart, then, certainly, any man or woman who refuses to submit to that sovereignty is degraded. If to be a disciple of Jesus Christ be the highest and most perfect state to which we can attain, they who fall from that state of discipleship fall from their dignity and welfare. And when that is the condition of households, God help such a people, for there is no help left in themselves.

4. Such, then, being the first consequences upon states, families, and men, what must be the future of the world, in the course upon which nations and people have now entered? First of all, the moral powers of the civil society of the world will become weaker and weaker. The moral authority, the moral sanctions, the moral influence, the power of prevailing over subjects to live in civil obedience, become less and less potent and persuasive in proportion as the State departs from its public

profession and practice of Christianity. As the government becomes weak, its power of coercing is paralysed, its power of conciliating is lost. The same befalls the authority of parents over their children; the moral self-control in which men ought to be trained up becomes impossible. Philosophers describe a man who has lost self-control—that is, the government over himself—as an intemperate man. And when men have lost the government over their passions, lusts, anger, avarice, and the like, what will be the state of society and of the commonwealth? Next, while the moral power diminishes, the material power must be perpetually increased—laws of coercion, penalties, police, standing armies. When men can no longer be governed by the free assent of the reason convinced of duty, and by the spontaneous obedience of the will submitted to the law, what remains to government but brute force? At this moment, five or six millions of men are under arms in the heart of this Christian Europe of ours, and are looking in each other's face, watching to see who shall make the first spring. St. Paul, describing the state of men in the last times, says that they shall be 'faithless;' the word in the

original means men with whom you can make no treaties; ἄσπονδοι,⁴ men in whose fidelity you cannot trust; with whom you can make neither convention nor truce, whom no international law, no respect of mutual rights can bind. And are not these last days now upon us? What treaty, or law, or obligation binding nations to respect the rights of weaker neighbours is respected now? Treaties bind no one, if interest intervene. Compacts and conventions perish, where there is hope to extend a frontier, or to annex a province, or sacrilegiously to usurp a city. Then it is sufficient to put the sword through all treaties and all conventions. The fruit of this is manifest—perpetual danger of external war, and the most horrible conflicts which this world has ever seen. And the conflicts which were external become internal too. A spirit of strife is poured out upon men; class is set against class, interest against interest, household against household, man against man, men against their rulers, against law, against authority. In the shock and disorder of contentions, society is dissolved. When the masses learn to know their power, the day is come to use it. From all this

⁴ 2 Tim. iii. 3.

results one of two things : either the tyranny of a multitude, blind to everything but the freaks and gusts of its own will, or the iron despotism of a military dictator. Wo to the world when the Legislator, who, on the mountain, promulgated the eight beatitudes, is no longer acknowledged as the Lawgiver and Sovereign of mankind! There remains nothing for the nations but the raging sea of popular lawlessness, or the iron rule of despots.

5. If such be the effect upon the world, what will be the effect upon the Church? Let us sum up what is the state of the Church at this moment. There never was a time, from the beginning of Christianity, when the Catholic Church was so wide-spread as it is now; when it had so nearly attained to that universal sway which is its Divine prerogative. Though the number of nations and of men that are external to Christianity still be vast, yet the wide-spread missions of the Church, extending beyond its visible pale, are at this day penetrating into all races and peoples upon earth. The circle of its unity, the spread and sway of its Episcopate, the apostolic thrones of the Church, at this moment not only reach throughout the Old World, but overshadow the

New. It has taken possession not only of the four continents known to our ancestors, but it holds also a fifth, with the islands of the Southern Seas. The sovereignty which began in the guest chamber at Jerusalem, and afterwards spread through the dispersion of Israel, and then extended to the fulness of the Gentiles, and then formed Christian Europe, has taken possession of America in the North and in the South, and has penetrated into Asia; is surrounding Africa, has obtained for its possession the great continent of Australia, and has made its home in the islands of the Pacific. There is no part of the world in which the one Church, Catholic and Roman, united to its one visible Head, is not at this moment to be found. Be sure of it, whatsoever may befall the civil society of the world, nothing can wither the mystical vine. There never was a moment when that world-wide Church was so perfectly united—its pastors to its people, and both to their visible Head.

The union of the pastors with their people is never so intense as when the world rejects them. Take Ireland, for example. The pastors of Ireland have been not only the spiritual shepherds of that

inviolable Catholic people, but they have been the friends, the counsellors—I may say the guardians and the rulers of Ireland, through three hundred years of suffering. And that which has taken place in Ireland is taking place at this moment all over the Christian world. In France, in Germany, in Italy, in Spain, wheresoever the civil society of the world turns against the faith and against the Holy See, there at once the people rally round their pastors with an intensity of union and fidelity which has never been surpassed. When the winds rave and the sun is covered, then the sheep and their shepherds draw together. And there is the same unity among the pastors one with another. The bishops of the Church were never more of one mind and of one heart than they are now. We read every day, in papers that profess to know the inmost mind of the Catholic Church, and yet know nothing, because they are either misled or they willingly go astray from truth—and which it may be I am not the judge to say—we read every day that, among the bishops of the Catholic Church who met last year in the Œcumenical Council, there were oppositions, debates, divisions. True it is, that in matters of prudence and legislation we had our

divergences of judgment; but in matters of Catholic doctrine and faith none existed. The result is proof. The world has endeavoured to find among the bishops of the Church some patron or abettor of its rebellion against the Holy See. But not one can be found. Almost every one who, in the liberty which we all enjoyed, judged and spoke with freedom on matters outside the faith, have explicitly and publicly declared their perfect and entire submission to the Divine authority of the Council. The unity of the pastors of the Teaching Church was never more solid and compact. I say it without hesitation, and I repeat it again—the Episcopate never was so unanimous as at this hour. After the Councils of Nice, Chalcedon, Constance, and Trent, there were bishops of the Church who forsook its unity, who fell, as I said before, like lightning from heaven. Now, at this moment, the unity of the bishops of the Church throughout the whole world is such, that I know not of one who has withdrawn his obedience from its Divine authority. I know not, I say, of one, and until I see the fact, I shall believe there will be none. But, more than this: the unity of faith at this moment throughout the

Catholic Church is such that there does not exist (what is rife elsewhere) an open question touching the matter of faith. There was a question, not open indeed, but not defined until the other day, and that question was this: 'Did our Divine Saviour promise to St. Peter that he and his successors, by the Divine assistance, should continue to the end of time to be the supreme and unerring teachers of the faith which He delivered?' There were a few who thought that the promise was made to the successors of St. Peter, to be enjoyed by him only when acting with the bishops throughout the world; but the Church ever believed that the promise was made not only to the successors of Peter together with the bishops, but to the successors of Peter as such; and that, as the Pontiff holds the supreme authority and jurisdiction attached to the Primacy, so he has also a Divine assistance perpetually guiding him, in order that, in the exercise of his supreme authority, upon which the whole Church of God depends, the successor of St. Peter and the Vicar of the Good Shepherd shall never go astray. There was, indeed, a divergence so far, and within that narrow limit: a divergence now closed for ever by the Divine authority of the Church, and sealed

with the signet of the Spirit of Truth. I say, then, there never was a time when, in faith, the Church throughout the world was so united; and united not only in what it believes, but in the principle upon which it believes; because it holds with one heart the infallibility of the supreme and Divine authority from which all teaching flows. And, further, the Church is at this moment more self-evident in the eyes of men than in any previous age of the world. There never was a time when the words of our Lord were more emphatically, I may say, more articulately fulfilled, ‘A city that is set on a mountain cannot be hid;’⁵ and most assuredly the Catholic and Roman Church at this moment stands out with a definite universality, with a visible unity, with an effulgence of light, never seen before. I do not think that anybody who professes to believe in a Church at all can stand for a moment in doubt whether the Church of Jesus Christ be the Greek Church, or the Anglican Church, or the Church Catholic and Roman, which alone spreads from sunrise to sunset. Our Lord said to His Apostles, ‘You are the light of the world,’ and never has that light shone out of

⁵ St. Matt. v. 14.

darkness with so luminous a splendour, giving evidence of itself, and testifying so clearly to its own existence and to its own authority, as at this hour. The sovereignty, therefore, of God, manifested through His Church, is at this moment more than ever revealed to the intellect and to the heart of men. Whether they will believe or whether they will not believe, there is a system spreading from east to west, not only claiming 1800 years of traditionary history, but exercising its prerogatives at this day, and manifestly seen to exercise them: known also never to have abdicated them for an hour; inflexible in its fidelity to the Divine revelation, requiring of all men—from its highest pastor, the supreme Pontiff, who sits on the throne as Vicar of Jesus Christ, down to the little Catholic child in the school—the same act of faith, the same submission of the intellect and of the will to the sovereignty of God. No one is exempt from that changeless law of faith and of submission. It is one and the same for all. Now, a system like this is so unlike anything human, it has upon it notes, tokens, marks so altogether supernatural, that men now acknowledge it to be either Christ or Anti-christ. There is nothing between these extremes.

Most true is this alternative. The Catholic Church is either the masterpiece of Satan or the kingdom of the Son of God.

Now I will conclude by drawing two very plain consequences: first, that all things are fulfilling the will of God. All things are for the sake of His elect, and He is accomplishing in the world His sovereignty in a way so unerring and so luminous, that they who believe can see it, and they who will not believe, in their blindness seem to be reduced to railing instead of reasoning against it. I have pointed out that there has been a line of the faithful servants of God, in all ages, from the beginning, — an unbroken chain, link within link; from just Abel down to the present day. This line of faithful became a people, chosen and preserved, by the grace of God, before and after the Incarnation; organised and knit together into one kingdom of faith. The typical Church of Israel was a shadow; the substance of the shadow is the Church of Jesus Christ. This family of grace is the special object, for the salvation of which all the order of God's sovereignty has been and is directed. The empires of the ancient world were employed to chastise, or to liberate, or to restore,

or to scatter it. The kingdoms and revolutions of the Christian world, in like manner, fulfil His purpose towards His elect. God willed all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the Truth. He willed also that all men should be called to the unity of the Church. His Apostles were sent to make disciples of all nations. Whoso will believe, he may freely enter into it; whoso will not believe, he closes the door against himself. The gates of the heavenly city stand open day and night; God never shuts them. They who have never heard of the kingdom of God will not have to give an account of it. They will be judged by the little they knew, and not by that which they could not have known. Those who might have known it, will be judged according to the way in which they received or rejected the light that was offered to them. All things are ordered for this work of salvation. God knows from all eternity who will be saved, and how many they will be. He does not diminish the number by refusing salvation to the willing, and He will not multiply the number by forcing the freewill of those who will not believe. It is a mystery of sovereign grace and of human freedom.

All things are working for the accomplishment of the mystery of salvation: ‘all things work together for good to those who love God.’⁶ Even the sins and the wickedness and the persecutions of this world, all tend to the salvation of those who believe. This world is the wine-press, in which the grapes are trodden; it is the threshing-floor, on which the wheat is beaten and winnowed from the chaff. The wine and the wheat are being made ready for the supper of the Lamb in the kingdom of God. These are the elect of God, who are faithful, and persevere in faith unto the end. The words, therefore, of John the Baptist are true at this hour. Our Divine Lord is in the midst of His Church, and ‘His fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly cleanse His floor, and gather His wheat into the barn; but the chaff He will burn with unquenchable fire.’⁷ If this be not sovereignty, in what does it consist? And it is of this the Apostle spoke when he said, in his own name and in the name of his successors, ‘We are unto God the good odour of Christ, in them who are saved and in them who perish: to some, indeed, the odour of death unto death: but to the

⁶ Rom. viii. 28.

⁷ St. Matt. iii. 12.

others, the odour of life unto life.⁸ That work of separation is going on now. It is not stayed, but accomplished by the apostasy of the civil order of men. They may go their way in the civilisation they have chosen, and in the progress of which they boast, but they will not diminish by one jot or tittle the sovereignty of God over the world. No; nor will they diminish the manifestation of that sovereignty in the confusions and torments of the world, to which it is hastening in speed. Its disorders, its revolutions, the rising of people against people and kingdom against kingdom, the dissensions among brethren, the treason against laws, the conspiracies which undermine the social order of the world, the visible changing into death and into dust, which is upon the whole political order of men who have renounced Christianity, — all this manifests, by an unconscious acknowledgment, the sovereignty of God. The Church, by its unity, its universality, its luminous action upon the intellect of men, whether they will believe or not; the Holy See, imperishable in the midst of eighteen hundred years of conflict, imperial over the intellect and will of men, reign-

⁸ 2 Cor. ii. 15, 16.

ing in the supernatural order over nations, races, and people;—these things also manifest the sovereignty of God. When St. Paul was shipwrecked upon the coast of Malta, a viper came out of the fire and fastened on his hand. The people at first said, ‘This is a murderer, whom the vengeance of God will not suffer to live.’ But when they saw that he neither swelled nor fell down dead, when unhurt he shook the deadly beast into the fire, they changed their minds, and said that he was a god. Surely the reason of man, seeing that the endless, manifold, world-wide, unrelenting enmity of the serpent has never prevailed over the Catholic and Roman Church; that all the power and malice of the world have never been able to overthrow the sovereignty of the Holy See, even though revolutions may sacrilegiously occupy the city of Rome, which the providence of God has given to be the throne of His Vicar—though at first they think the Church of Jesus Christ to be Antichrist, reason must, on calmer, wiser thoughts, conclude that there is in it a life which is not of man, and a power, which is not for evil, but for good; and if so, that it must be the life and the power of God.

We have come now to the end of what I have endeavoured to say. You will recollect that we have seen, first, that the sovereignty of God over the intellect by faith illuminates, elevates, and perfects the reason of man, and that to reject faith is to degrade the reason. Secondly, that the sovereignty of God over the will by the law and grace of charity, perfects the image of God in man. Thirdly, that the sovereignty of God, over the whole civil order and collective commonwealth of men, is the principle from which the welfare and well-being, the civilisation, the progress of human society depends. And now we have traced out, slightly and faintly, and only in outline, as I well know, the sovereignty of God over the whole world,—enough, at least, to show that the apostasy of the world does in no way diminish that sovereignty, but that in its rebellion it is accomplishing and perfecting the work to which that sovereignty is directed; and, further, that at this time there are tokens which, I might almost say, are like the voices and thunderings in heaven, and the writings of a man's hand upon the wall, warning the world of those things which are coming upon the earth. There are voices as the

voices of a great multitude, not only in heaven, but among men. These earthly voices are discordant, harsh, and terrific. They are the cries of Anti-christian and anti-social revolutions, visible on the face of nations, of dark and sanguinary conspiracies, hiding themselves under the surface of the earth—more perilous, because not seen. The time is come when the only safety for nations and for men is in the recognition of the sovereignty of God. There is nothing else that can save the Christian society of the world—nothing else that can save the soul in the day of the great account.

‘ There were great voices in heaven, saying: The kingdom of this world is become our Lord’s and His Christ’s, and He shall reign for ever and ever. Amen.

‘ We give Thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, who art, and who wast, and who art to come; because Thou hast taken to Thee Thy great power, and Thou hast reigned.

‘ And the nations were angry, and Thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that Thou shouldst render reward to Thy servants, the prophets, and the saints, and to them that fear Thy Name, little and

great; and shouldst destroy them who have corrupted the earth.’⁹

‘Great and wonderful are Thy works, O Lord God Almighty; just and true are Thy ways, O King of Ages.

‘Who shall not fear Thee, O Lord, and magnify Thy Name? For Thou only art holy: for all nations shall come and shall adore in Thy sight, because Thy judgments are manifest.’¹⁰

⁹ Apoc. xi. 15, 17, 18.

¹⁰ Ibid. xv. 3, 4.



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